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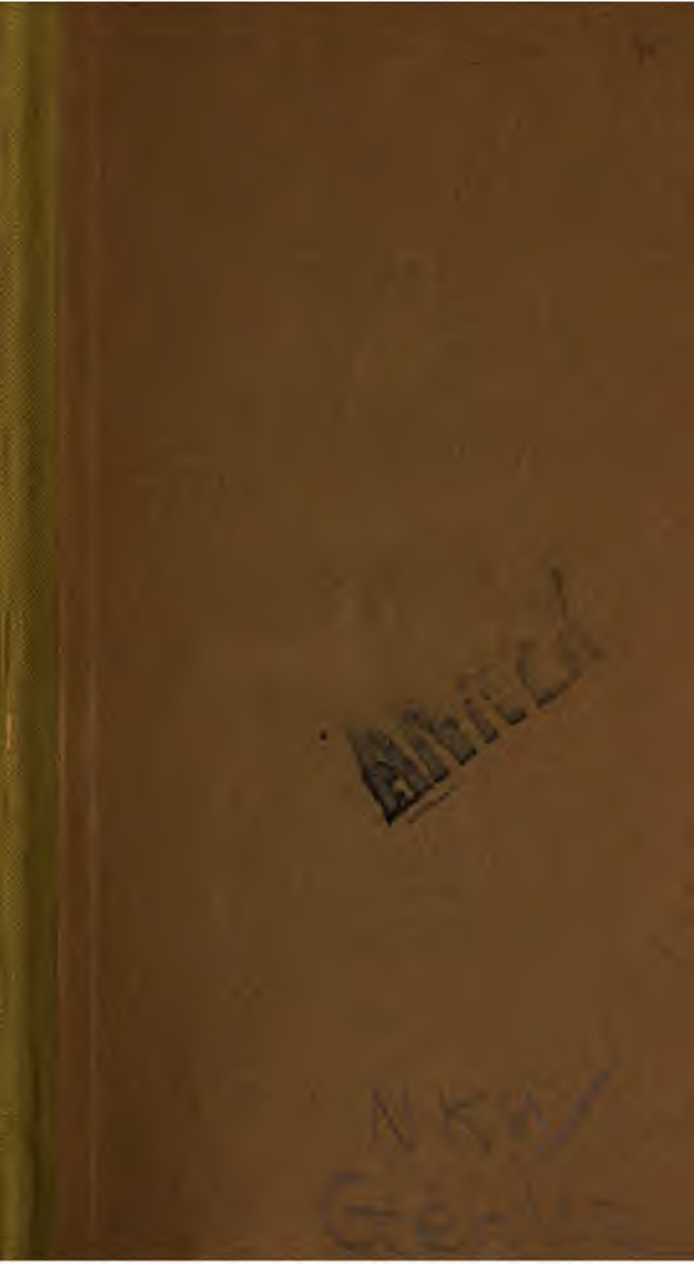

LA BRUYERE THE LESS:

OR,

CHARACTERS AND MANNERS

OF THE

CHILDREN OF THE PRESENT AGE.

WRITTEN FOR THE USE OF CHILDREN OF TWELVE OR THIRTEEN YEARS OF AGE; WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE TEN LAST CHAPTERS, WHICH APPLY TO PERSONS OF MORE ADVANCED YEARS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

MADAME DE GENLIS.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY J. STOCKDALE;

FOR P. WOGAN, T. JACKSON, J. RICE, G. FOLINGSBY, AND J. STOCKDALE.

1801.

1. Conduct of life.

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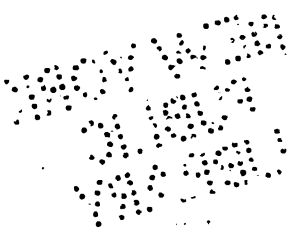

EPISTLE DEDICATORY

TO MY GRANDSON

ANATOLE DE LA WOESTINE.

MY DEAR SON,

You are now in your twelfth year; the greateſt part of the following Work is calculated for that age; but I am perſuaded that in reading even the laſt Chapters, with your preceptor, you will be able perfectly to comprehend them.

Maternal tenderneſs conſecrates this Work to you: may filial piety give it value in your eyes! Read it over often; meditate upon the

 leſſons

31 X 653

leſſons it offers you; they are dictated by experience, and prompted by the tendereſt of all ſentiments; and believe me, you will be happy and worthy of being beloved, only in proportion as you follow them.

BERLIN,
August 15, 1793.

PREFACE.

I HAD already publiſhed, for the uſe of infancy and youth, tales, dramas, and a romance in letters *; a book of maxims and portraits was wanting, and I now preſent them with it. In my *New Method of Inſtruction* I have alſo introduced *detached thoughts for Children.* I might have intitled the preſent work *La Rochefoucault the Leſs*; I have not done ſo, becauſe my principles are in general very different from thoſe of that author. There are in his book

* The Young Exiles.

many things which I like and admire; but I muſt alſo obſerve that it contains many futile concluſions; that the ſtyle is incorrect and often affected; and that it abounds with falſe and dangerous maxims, and holds forth a ſyſtem which, adopted ſince by a diſciple of the modern philoſophy *, has produced that horrid work †, deſpiſed by all who poſſeſs ſenſibility of ſoul, or ſoundneſs of judgment.

The moſt profound of all obſervers, the moſt perfect of all moraliſts, the writer the moſt ſpirited, and moſt original in my opinion, is La Bruyere; to juſtify the title which I have given to this eſſay, I have en-

* Helvetius.

† The book intitled *De l'Eſprit*; I adviſe all young people to read M. de Harpe's excellent *Refutation* of this work.

deavoured

deavoured to ſeize the tone, and to imitate the manner of my admired and favourite author. I have adopted, or *parodied* the titles of his chapters, but not being able to ſpeak ſo well, I have choſen ſubjects totally different; he is a painter upon a grand ſcale, whom it is impoſſible to copy in *miniture*, and from whom I wiſhed only to borrow the ſtyle and the colouring. I have never had the vanity to hope to equal him, I pretend only to reſemble him in a ſlight degree.

The laſt ten chapters of this work are of a nature different from the preceding part; I have not written them for the inſtruction of youth*; they are reflections ſpringing from

* Excepting only the chapter *On Travelling*, of which almoſt all the leſſons it contains are addreſſed to youth.

the

the heart, and traced in the tablet of memory, in various ſituations of my life; they are no laboured compoſitions, but in reading them over, I have found in them a character of truth, of which the intereſt may well ſupply the place of talent.

We are apt in our pictures of life to take our colouring from the times in which we live; it is difficult to write with impartiality on the paſſions, the propenſities, and natural inclinations of men our contemporaries. Hobbes, an athieſt, and living in times of faction, has repreſented man under the hideous form of the moſt atrociouſly wicked of beings; hepainted faithfully what he beheld, but he drew falſe concluſions from the whole. He might as well have ſuppoſed that he could have judged of the phyſical conſtitution of a man, from ſeeing him attacked by an overpowering malady,

which

which had thrown him into convulſions. Men the moſt healthy and robuſt, may become victims to a contagion, and die of the plague when it is epidemical. La Rochefoucault, in an agreeable but ſuperficial work, has been guilty of a fault of the ſame nature; he was a witneſs of petty factions; he ſaw courtiers agitated by the ſpirit of party, and he has unjuſtly attributed to the whole human ſpecies the errors of the moment, and the vices of a ſingle claſs of individuals. He has degraded and calumniated man.

I too have been deſtined to live n an age of public diſtractions; I have been the witneſs of crimes ſurpaſſing all of which I ever read; I have been the victim of calumny; I am a fugitive proſcribed and deſpoiled; but I have not loſt all: the love of truth is ſtill left me; and I dare flatter

ter myſelf there will not be found in this eſſay, or in any of my works, either exaggeration, malevolence, or miſanthropy, diſpoſitions too often produced by injuſtice and misfortune.

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LA BRUYERE THE LESS:

OR,

CHARACTERS AND MANNERS

OF THE

CHILDREN OF THE PRESENT AGE.

CHAP. I.

Plan of the Work, and Object of the Author.

"THERE repay to my children what I have "borrowed from them; they have furnished me with the subject-matter of this "work, and it is but just that, having "completed it with all that attention to "truth of which I was capable, and which "it merits from me, I should make them "the restitution*."

Children have ever been the chief objects of my serious meditations; for, becoming

* Such is nearly word for word the introductory paragraph of *The Characters* of La Bruyere: he says, I restore to the public what I have borrowed from it, &c. The inverted commas mark what I have copied from him: I have made no other change in this passage but that of substituting *children* for the word *public*.

coming a mother at a very early age, I was from that circumſtance led to ſtudy them with peculiar care. I have educated a great number; and beſides, have never neglected any opportunity of obſerving thoſe of my friends, and even thoſe which I have met with in ſociety and in my various travels. I have made it a practice to write at the time all my obſervations on this ſubject, ſo that my young readers may be aſſured that all the portraits they are about to contemplate are drawn from nature: I declare at the ſame time, that it will be impoſſible for them ever to find the key to theſe characters*: firſt, becauſe I have met with my originals in divers countries, and that to be able to diſcover them it would be neceſſary to commence a tour through France, Switzerland, Holland, Italy, England, Germany, &c.; ſecondly, becauſe, ſince my collecting theſe portraits, almoſt all my perſonages have grown up, and have become ſo perfect, or are ſo entirely corrected by education and experience, that they are at preſent not to be recognized. However, as nature is always the ſame, there

* That is to ſay, the real names of the perſons whoſe portraits I have given in this work.

there may ſtill be many children who may reſemble thoſe whom I have painted, though I have never known them; in the ſame manner, we every day ſee perſons whom we might perſuade ourſelves ſat for the portraits of La Bruyere, who wrote a hundred years ago. This author, ſo ingenious, ſo moral, ſo profound an obſerver, has had the art of uniting inſtruction with pleaſure in painting men as they are: in the different portraits which he has drawn, he has marked in glowing colours the amiable nature of virtue in the human character, whilſt he has held up vice to ridicule and deteſtation. All his detached maxims, and all his criticiſms tend to make us love and revere religion, and virtue, of which it is the baſis; and hate and deſpiſe impiety and vice. I have propoſed to myſelf the ſame; and happy if I could accompliſh it as fully, and if this little work ſhould prove as uſeful and agreeble to children, as the *Great* La Bruyere muſt ever be to thoſe of riper judgment.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of Reading, Study, and Application.

WHEN we ſay that nothing diſplays more good ſenſe, or is more uſeful than a taſte for reading, two things are to be underſtood as neceſſary, *the proper choice of books*, and *application in reading*.

On the contrary, nothing can be a ſtronger indication of want of ſenſe than an indolence or habitual inattention in reading; nor can any thing be more pernicious than reading without diſtinction or diſcernment every thing which falls into our hands, or, what is ſtill worſe, ſelecting from taſte books of a frivolous nature or dangerous tendency.

Some young ladies in Germany excited my attention by the ſingularity of their taſte in reading, as well as by the ſtrange manner in which they read. I ſhall only mention Louiſa; her portrait will be that of many others.

Louiſa, who was only twelve years old, like moſt other young females in Germany, underſtood

underſtood French and German equally well, but was miſerably deficient in her knowledge of both languages. She was *paſſionately* fond of one kind of reading only; namely, *French novels*; though there was at leaſt one quarter of each volume loſt to her, owing to her ignorance of the French phraſes, and even of many words in that language, which muſt of neceſſity throw a good deal of obſcurity over the ſenſe of what ſhe read. It was all one; ſhe fought with avidity, not ſuch or ſuch a work, but indiſcriminately all that bore the name of *French novels*; then, according to the taſte or opinion of others, ſhe would pronounce *that book is tireſome*, or, *this book is charming*; but whether the moſt deteſtable production or a maſter-piece of genius, this book would have been read preciſely in the ſame manner: and it was thus.

Louiſa took her book in one hand, and in the other the ſtocking at which ſhe was knitting; and (when the weather permitted), ſhe would open a window which looked into the ſtreet, ſeat herſelf ſo as that ſhe might ſee all that was paſſing there,

place her book open on the frame of the window, and then, like Julius Cæsar*, she did three things at once; she knitted, read, and observed the people who passed by. If the window was on the ground-floor, the street much crowded, and consequently very noisy, nothing was wanting to her happiness. It required this assemblage of pleasures to give reading a true charm to Louisa. The book would have had scarcely any more interest for her if a shower had dispersed the crowd, or if she had lost one of her knitting needles: and what rendered this still more astonishing was, that she read in a language of which she could comprehend so little.

It is easy to do any little work with the hands whilst listening to another who reads aloud, because we have neither the trouble nor the employment of holding the book, turning over the leaves, nor reading it with the eyes; but what can result from reading such as I have described?—innumerable false ideas, and not one useful reflection.

We

* Julius Cæsar, it is said, could dictate three or four different letters at the same time.

We ſhould give our entire application to whatever we do, if worthy of it; and no employment demands more ſerious attention than reading.

Young females, who from preference read only frivolous books, have certainly but a ſmall portion of mind; they read only to eſcape from that weariſome langour which the barrenneſs of their own ideas cauſes; neither to underſtand, to think, nor to reflect, is merely to vegetate: one may eſcape from this ſtate ſo mortally inſipid, by efforts of application, by reading with extreme attention works of merit, the reading of which, when well digeſted and maturely reflected upon, will enlarge the mind and form the judgment; but indolence and idleneſs make us prefer that kind of reading which neither invites nor merits any attention. The ſame want of diſcernment ſhewn in the ſelection of books, will alſo guide young people of this deſcription in the choice of their ſocieties, converſations, and public amuſements. They read that they may *eſcape from themſelves*; they like viſits, and go to the theatres for the ſame reaſon; and in ſuch a train of life they will for ever re-

main *children*, and children *ill educated*, miſerably ſpoiled.

But what are thoſe works of merit which I would recommend? it is La Bruyere *the Great* himſelf, who will anſwer this queſtion: forget not his reply.

"When," ſays he, "a book elevates "the mind, inſpires noble and virtuous "ſentiments, ſeek no other teſt to judge "of the work; it is good, and executed "by the hand of a workman*."

It is recounted as a ridiculous anecdote, that a geometrician, after hearing a book of amuſement read, demanded ſeriouſly, "*What does all this prove?*" the queſtion however contained a very rational, and very juſt criticiſm if in effect the book *proved* nothing. A book is truly eſtimable only when it has a moral aim, and when all its different parts, at leaſt the greater ſhare of them, tend to the ſame point. Any book which diſcovers not ſentiments calculated to ſupport and ſtrengthen virtue, or which offers no uſeful ideas, is but a frivolous work, which merits not a *ſecond* peruſal, whatever be its charms of ſtyle.

When

* Characters by La Bruyere, chapter the firſt.

When we are very ſure, or perſuade ourſelves that we are ſo, that ſuch or ſuch a thing will procure us a great pleaſure, no price is too high for the purchaſe of this deſired good; even phyſical ſufferings are borne with patience, however ſevere or long protracted.

Thus have we ſeen females, before perukes or Grecian habits became the fashion, ſit two or three hours a day ſubmitting to the torture of having their hair frizzed, torn, and dragged in all directions; thus have we ſeen them bear, without ſeeming to feel it, the puniſhment of ſtiff whalebone ſtays very tight laced, and dance gaily under this unbending armour, with ſhoes ridiculouſly ſmall, ornamented with heels very ſlender, and of a prodigious height; and ſuffering beſides all this, the inſupportable inconvenience of an enormous hoop, and dragging after them trains two or three yards in length. Thus we ſee them at this day, even in climates frozen by the north, voluntarily endure the keeneſt rigours which cold can inflict, that they may enjoy the *felicity* of reſembling, at leaſt in their coſtume, the Grecian

Grecian ſtatues with their tranſparent dra-pery.

Were young people well convinced that the cultivation of the mind could procure them exquiſite and laſting pleaſures, ſtudy would no longer wear a diſguſting aſpect. The proof of this aſſertion is, that thoſe who have this conviction apply themſelves with perſeverance, and even with delight, to branches of inſtruction in themſelves of the dryeſt nature; as for example, the elements of arithmetic, and the ſtudy of grammar.

What perſuades people of little reflection that happineſs is only to be found in the empty diſſipation of the great world is, that they ſee only the exterior, and that in general how deceitful, of the triflers and coquettes who form the greater part of the maſs. They ſee them often aſſume the appearance of the moſt rapturous felicity; they hear them inceſſantly repeat that the buſineſs of life is amuſement, that they are amuſed, that all is *charming*, *ecſtatic*, &c. but we muſt not be the dupes of theſe demonſtrations and of this language. When once entered into the world, it is neceſſary

to

to conform to its cuſtoms, and to appear pleaſed with it: to bring into company an air of abſence or chagrin is at once impolite and ridiculous. We are abſolutely forced, by the laws of ſociety, to ſeem to participate in its enjoyments, and to ſhew a mind perfectly diſengaged; were we to be ſeized with ſudden illneſs in an aſſembly, ſhould any painful recollections occur, any pathetic ſcenes obtrude themſelves on our memory; ſhould we meet our bittereſt enemy, or be aſſailed by the ſhafts of malignity; ſhould one or more of theſe cauſes all at once fill the ſoul with anguiſh, theſe are impreſſions which muſt abſolutely be concealed. I agree that ſuch a conſtraint muſt be a torment almoſt inſupportable; it matters not, ſtill it muſt be ſubmitted to, and with a good grace, whatever it may coſt; they muſt ſtill laugh, trifle, and wear an air of content and approbation: it is from this cauſe that ſkilful obſervers diſcover in the great world ſuch frequent inſincere applauſes, ſo much aſſumed gaiety, ſo many forced laughs.

Coquettes and perſons given up to diſſipation would in general excite our compaſſion, could we ſearch into the receſſes of

of their hearts, or view them in their domeſtic circles; their apathy, their indolence, their invincible diſlike to all rational and ſolid occupation, renders the neceſſary interruptions to their viſits and amuſements inſupportable to them. A moment of ſolitude appears to them an age; duties the moſt ſweet to fulfil, are in their eyes only wearisome ſubjections; their pains, it is true, are but trivial, but they feel them with an extreme ſenſibility, and they ſuffer ſo much the more from them as theſe puerile chagrins are often excited by cauſes in themſelves ſhameful, and that the deſpicable vanity which produces them obliges them often at the ſame time to conceal them: an entertainment where they have been unavoidably abſent, the ſucceſs of a rival, ſecret jealouſies, pretenſions ill founded, hopes which prove fallacious, concealed diſlikes, ill humour of which they would bluſh to own the unworthy cauſe, diſſimulation and continual conſtraint, amuſements which fatigue, but which are ſtill purſued with avidity, a perpetual ſtate of agitation, and ever without cauſe, an inconſtancy which nothing can fix; in fine, a hidden enemy

enemy which mingles in all, corrupts all: such is the situation, such the pretended happiness of those entirely devoted to the gay world.

Oh! how much are these to be pitied, when voluntary miseries such as I have described, and which do not even deserve the name of distresses, have acquired such importance as to produce all the effects of the passions! when such trivial causes can sink them in dejection and wretchedness, can transport them into fits of anger and violence! how much to be pitied when all the serenity of the soul is liable to be disturbed by the negligence or forgetfulness of a milliner or a mantua maker!

What ails you, Melania? I perceive you have been weeping; a gloomy melancholy has spread itself over your features: does one of your friends labour under some mortal disease? has your mamma taken a journey, and left you at home? has any distressing event happened in your family? —nothing of all this; but the mother of Melania insists on her daughter's wearing pockets, and Melania will be no longer dressed in the fashion; the robe of Melania

lania will not cling ſo cloſe to her ſides; Melania will have an air leſs Grecian! What an intereſting ſubject of affliction! Comfort yourſelf, Melania; for with or without pockets you will never reſemble the Venus de Medicis.

The happineſs of people of the world is merely an illuſion; but nothing can be more real than that of perſons who are really fond of ſtudy, of literature and the arts: their pleaſures are not noiſy, their habits of life are ſedentary and retired, their occupations are of the ſolitary kind; for this reaſon, their enjoyments and their felicity do not ſtrike the eyes of the multitude; for this reaſon, the vulgar are unable to judge of the nature or degree of their happineſs. But were the votaries of the world to follow them into their retreats; how much would they envy their fate, were they to behold the innocence and tranquillity of their lives, could they know how rapidly, how deliciouſly time paſſes with them, and this often in the midſt of reverſes, in ſpite of the rigours of fortune, of the injuſtice of men!

What

What might prove to young people, capable of any reflection, how preferable the pleaſures of ſtudy are to thoſe of the world is, that we every day ſee perſons of every age and each ſex become diſguſted with the world, and retire from it, never to return; whilſt on the contrary real ſcholars never renounce ſtudy; nor do people of letters or diſtinguiſhed artiſts ever become diſguſted with literature or the arts.

After theſe reflections, ſo ſtriking from their truth, children who naturally poſſeſs any degree of good ſenſe muſt be convinced that inſtruction and information are inexhauſtible ſources of happineſs, and of the ſweeteſt pleaſures; and were it even true, which is far from being the caſe, that the world offered real enjoyments, the nature of thoſe enjoyments is only adapted to youth; what then muſt become of us in the decline of life, when we of courſe become weary of the world, and overpowered with laſſitude and diſguſt for its pleaſures? it is then too late to acquire a taſte for rational occupation; habituated to a long courſe of trifling, the mind becomes abſolutely incapable of any degree of application

tion: to render ſtudy the delight of every future period of our lives, we muſt devote ourſelves to an uninterrupted purſuit of it in the early part of youth.

Were children to uſe ſteady application from the age of ten or twelve years, at fourteen or fifteen all the difficulties of ſtudy would be at an end.

The younger it is attempted, the more it is in our power to acquire ſtrong habits of application.

During the age that all the organs have the greateſt degree of flexibility, habits of application may be as eaſily taken up as thoſe of any other kind.

From the time we begin to apply, we ceaſe to feel that laſſitude and wearineſs which is the bane both of comfort and improvement. Objects the moſt intereſting can afford us no pleaſure if we do not give them all our attention; I have ſeen people yawn during the repreſentation of a tragedy of Corneille or Racine, and at the operas of Gluck: they heard them not. How can you give your attention to a book, if you think of other things all the time your preceptor is reading aloud to you; and

even

even while you read yourself; as it is easy to perceive by the monotony, or often by the false inflexions of your voice.

That remark ——— which your preceptor has made on a particular passage in your reading, that reflection so just and so striking, is lost upon you; for want of attention, you comprehended nothing of the passage to which the remark or the reflection refers.

A discourse is addressed to you on the subject of some of the greatest men who ever existed, with the view of instructing you in histories the most astonishing, the most marvellous; you know only that you have heard the names of Cato, of Titus, of Marcus Aurelius; or of Charlemagne, of St. Louis, of Henry the Fourth, &c. you heard nothing else: of what then were you thinking? of your *paper kite*, or your *foot ball!* At least we may suppose this to be the case; and what age are you? twelve years old!——ah! blush for such a puerility; correct yourself of it quickly, or you will all your future life be one of the most ignorant, the most contracted of beings; and so much the more contemptible, as

nothing

nothing has been neglected to improve and inſtruct you.

It is very natural at your age to be fond of the plays ſuited to that age; you are ſupplied with every thing for that purpoſe; profit by the indulgence: I would even have you, while engaged in thoſe plays, give your whole attention to them, it will give you more addreſs and grace in them; be always attentive to what you are about; were it only building houſes with cards; and you will conſequently have no abſences during your leſſons and ſtudies. You will tell me that this abſence of mind is involuntary: not at all; for it depends upon yourſelf to recall your thoughts as ſoon as you find them wandering; it depends upon yourſelf to liſten with attention; in ſhort, if you have a ſincere wiſh to do ſo, you may in a very ſhort time get the better of the bad habit of ſilly and continual inattention. What will you gain by perſiſting in it? your leſſons will always fatigue you to death; nevertheleſs they muſt ſtill be continued; you will be reproved, reprimanded, humbled, puniſhed; you will diſtreſs your teachers and your parents; you will make no

progreſs

progreſs in any uſeful purſuit; you will remain in utter ignorance; you will become a fool, perhaps a coxcomb; for this is generally the conſequence, where young people reject inſtruction, or neglect their talents.

But in giving application to your leſſons, you will ſoon ceaſe to be wearied by them; by degrees you will become intereſted in them; your mind will be formed and enlarged; you will be cited as one of the models for children of your age; you will be encouraged, careſſed, recompenſed, beloved. You will be the pride of your maſters, and the happineſs of your parents; you will become an enlightened, a ſolidly virtuous man, a uſeful and eſtimable member of the community; you will enjoy real and laſting pleaſures, and all the happineſs which this world can beſtow. Make the experiment; is it not worth a trial! make good and firm reſolutions; adhere to them only for ſix months; and I dare anſwer for it you will thank me for having given you *counſels ſo ſalutary.*

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of perſonal Merit.

WHAT is underſtood by perſonal merit is, underſtanding, talents, wit, information, and virtue; in a word, thoſe qualities which we poſſeſs in ourſelves, not thoſe advantages which are derived only from chance or fortune, as birth and riches. All the world agrees unanimouſly, that it is weak and ridiculous to take a pride in poſſeſſing a palace which we inherit from our anceſtors, and which a fire may conſume in a night: all the world agrees, that it is abſurd to feel a vanity from the antiquity of our genealogy or the glory of our progenitors; certainly nothing of all this depends upon ourſelves; we owe it all to chance or the caprices of fortune. But what is it then that we can call our own? what have we that in reality belongs to ourſelves, and which nothing can raviſh from us? alas! not even the only true good, not even virtue! that we muſt infallibly loſe, if we forſake religion, or if we give ourſelves up to pride.

If

If there existed on earth any *personal merit*, which we owed only to ourselves, which we were sure we should always retain, which was eminently useful to others, we might conceive a degree of pride, though still a culpable one, since it would be offending the Creator, to whom we should owe all such gifts, and to whom we should give all the glory. But no such merit ever has or ever will exist; God has ordered it so to preserve us from pride, which always produces ingratitude.

It has pleased God not to confer on us any advantage on which it was possible to found vanity with any shadow of reason.

A benefit ought to touch, but not flatter us, when we have not in any way deserved to obtain it. A recompense is honourable, but a gift purely gratuitous cannot be so.

Had God in the bosom of your mother disposed your organs in such a manner as to give you more memory, more intelligence than commonly fall to the share of others; had you merited this distinction from him? you agree that it is a proof of folly to be vain of a handsome face, because,

say

say you, besides the frivolous nature of beauty, *we have not made our own forms*; have we then made our minds?

You have a depth of knowledge, extensive information; have you this by intuition? do you not owe it partly to the care of your parents, to masters and instructors? partly to the people with whom you have lived, and to a certain concurrence of circumstances, calculated to develope the ideas and enlarge the mind? had fate condemned you to hew stones all the day, or to labour the ground without relaxation, could you have acquired all this erudition? or even, born in your present rank, had your parents from want of affection neglected your education, had they given you the example of vice or frivolous dissipation, and then thrown into the world without guide, and without principles, you had been drawn into all those errors which ignorance and indolence produce, what accomplishments, what information could you have attained?

Despise not then the honest citizen, who appears little better than a brute in your eyes; he was born perhaps with as much memory, as much intelligence as you; he makes

makes boots and ſhoes perfectly well; you know ancient and modern hiſtory as perfectly: you have both equally profited by the different educations which have been given you.

Deſpiſe not even the unfortunate youth without morals, and without virtue; if he has been ill educated: to ſurpaſs you in every thing, perhaps, he wanted only a tender and virtuous father, or a real friend.

The reſult of theſe reflections is, that it is in effect the height of abſurdity and folly to be proud of birth or fortune which we owe to our forefathers; and that it is no leſs ridiculous to be vain of *perſonal merit*. A perſon capable of reflection, who poſſeſſes moderation and good ſenſe, who is thoroughly well informed and perfectly rational, will ever be modeſt. For pride is compoſed of folly, blindneſs, injuſtice, and ingratitude.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of little Girls.

NOTHING can be more amiable than a little girl who is gentle, docile, ingenuous, feeling, grateful, and modestly reserved.

Lucy is eight years of age; she is not pretty, but she has so many graces, that her figure is generally admired. She was born with but a moderate degree either of memory or apprehension; yet notwithstanding this, she surpasses most children of her age in accomplishments and information. She has always had a constant desire to please, and to render herself agreeable to those with whom she lives; this sentiment has given her two qualities, which enable her to succeed in every thing she undertakes; namely, docility and application. Lucy has so much gentleness, she acknowledges her faults with so much candour and regret, she has so much sincerity that it is impossible to chide her; but so far from abusing the indulgence and goodness that

is

is ſhewn her, it is with her only a further motive for her propriety of conduct, and for exerting all her care to correct her faults. She will have a great deal of rationality and of wit, becauſe ſhe loves to ſeek good advice; ſhe accuſtoms herſelf to reflection; ſhe can be ſilent, and liſten with attention to the converſation of rational and ingenious people. The friends of her mother engage a great deal of her attention; but ſhe is, without being timid, always reſerved, never importunate in ſhewing that attention: to complete her character, Lucy is never ſeen a ſingle inſtant idle; ſhe is already charged with a number of little cares relative to domeſtic management, of which ſhe acquits herſelf with great regularity, preciſion, and economy; and all who know her pronounce with one accord, Happy will the huſband be who obtains the hand of Lucy! happy the family who ſhall adopt ſuch a child!

I am ſorry not to be able to ſay ſo much in praiſe of her couſin; but I am equally incapable of flattering and of overcharging my portraits; I paint faithfully what I behold.

Hortenſia is as miſerable as a child of her age can be. The leaſt contradiction irritates, grieves, and puts her out of temper; ſhe is almoſt conſtantly diſcontented or chagrined at ſomething. What uninterrupted wretchedneſs muſt ſhe not be a prey to! If any little attention to her is omitted; if her new bonnet, or new robe is unnoticed; if a propoſed party of pleaſure does not take place; if ſhe does not dance as much as ſhe had expected at a ball, or is not aſked by a great number, and of the beſt dancers; if her partner does not contend for the beſt place for her; if ſhe perceives that any of her little companions are reckoned handſomer or more agreeable than ſhe; and above all if her robemaker or millener has failed in punctuality, what bitter and violent agitations does it not occaſion! what inquietudes, what impatience, what emotions of grief and anger! Add to all this, the inſupportable fatigue which her leſſons cauſe her; applying to nothing, making no progreſs in any thing, it is almoſt death to her to attend for an inſtant; and the only fruit ſhe reaps from thoſe leſſons is a headache, ill humour, and habits of impertinence

impertinence to her masters, whom she treats with intolerable arrogance.

Hortensia has that silly vanity which renders her insupportable to others, as well as to herself; she expects to be the only person minded in company, and never wears an air of gaiety but when she finds all looks and all attentions fixed on herself. To please her parents, she is continually praised and flattered; but were every one to give their real opinion, she would be universally pronounced troublesome, ridiculous, and disagreeable. Hortensia is passionately fond of dress, and descants already on the fashions; she despises those little girls who are dressed with simplicity, and envies those whose ornaments she thinks are more elegantly arranged than her own: she has an invincible aversion to the small number distinguished by brilliant talents or extraordinary beauty; the only kind of superiority which does not excite her jealousy, is that of virtue and goodness.

Hortensia would not have her young friends outshine her in dress or figure, yet she wishes them to be fashionable in their appearance: for the world she would not

connect herſelf with a little girl who had too long a waiſt, who wore pockets, or who tied her ſaſh with a bad grace. She would alſo deſire that the parents of all her companions ſhould be rich; that they ſhould have fine houſes ſumptuouſly furniſhed: and ſympathy always ſpeaks more ſtrongly to her in favour of thoſe little girls whoſe mothers give children's balls.

Hortenſia, whoſe taſtes are already all depraved, hates the country and all its innocent pleaſures: the world, its circles and its noiſe, are really become neceſſary to her. Already has ſhe loſt the charming freſhneſs of her age, but *rouge* has ſupplied its place: her health declines; before twenty her complexion will have aſſumed a ſallow hue: very well, ſhe will then put on white. Her diſpoſitions and her manner of life, even at this early age, have caſt a fatal blight on her character: who will in future have the temerity to eſpouſe her? no man of ſenſe or delicacy, I am well aſſured; but there are ſo many fools and coxcombs who marry! ſuch will be the choice of Hortenſia, and it muſt be confeſſed the alliance will be well aſſorted.

This

This portrait of a ſpoiled child (nearly approaching to vice) perfectly reſembles that of a coquette, of whatever age ſhe may be; in character theſe two perſonages bear the moſt ſtriking ſimilitude, from folly, caprice, and puerility.

One of the things which contributes moſt to the unhappineſs of coquettes and coxcombs is, that they are perpetually deceived in their hopes; as they deſire only an imaginary good, they muſt of courſe form vain phantoms and falſe images, which reality always deſtroys. They perſuade themſelves that at ſuch an entertainment, or on ſuch an occaſion, their triumph will be complete; that it will dazzle all eyes, and that they ſhall experience a joy the moſt exquiſite and unmixed: nothing of all this happens; the triumphs of ſelf love always falls ſhort of expectation; pride is inſatiable; it promiſes itſelf all, that is to ſay impoſſibilities: and if the leaſt ſuffrage is wanting to its ſucceſs, it is diſcontented; what then becomes of it when it is abſolutely deceived in its hopes? and this ſo frequently happens.

I have seen Chloe ready to set out for a ball contemplate herself at the glass, and not venturing to praise her own figure in direct terms, say with an air of complacency, *I believe this dress will attract attention.* The dress in reality was elegant and expensive, and Chloe departed in full confidence of her approaching triumph; but with what ill humour, what vexation did she return! scarcely had a single eye been directed toward this charming dress, all were engaged in admiring the young Amelia, who only wore a simple robe of lawn; but Amelia rarely shews herself in public, and when seen, people are never tired of looking at and admiring the graces of her figure and her air, at once modest and noble. Poor Chloe! what a melancholy entertainment for you! and you are obliged to conceal your despicable chagrin, but it bursts forth in spite of you; it is seen in your ill humour, in your dejected and absent air, in the little criticisms which have escaped you on this charming Amelia. That which above all exasperates you, is the praises which are bestowed on the elegant simplicity of Amelia's dress. It consisted

fisted of a robe very fine, it is true, and of a dazzling whiteness, but plain, not made in any uncommon form, and marking the shape with modesty; a sash of white riband, *without spangles*; and her head with no other ornament than the finest hair in the world, curled and arranged with grace.—Yet the parents of Amelia are rich; they adore their daughter, and refuse her nothing that she can desire; but it is known that this modesty of apparel is Amelia's own choice; that she has never dressed more magnificently; she thinks, it is added, that though it is ridiculous to dress in an awkward manner, it is shameful to go to great expence for the toilette. Amelia has neither jewels, nor splendid robes; but Amelia is charitable and benevolent.——Oh, unfortunate Chloe! what are your thoughts, what are your sensations whilst this *éloge* is sounding in your ears! O how heavy at that moment seemed your bandeau, your necklace, your girdle of precious stones set as antiques, and your robe so exquisitely elegant! that robe, the object of your fondest hopes for the last eight days!

But, it may be ſaid, that vanity and coquetry produce at leaſt pleaſing hopes, and that as long as theſe illuſions laſt, they beſtow happineſs. By no means. Theſe futile hopes are ever accompanied with fears, doubts, and anxieties, which render them real torments. The milliner may have ill executed the idea which has been given her; the mantua-maker has a great deal of work in hand, and may have failed in punctuality; the head dreſs may not have been ſent home in time, &c. what perturbations! what melancholy apprehenſions leſt the robe, the hat, or the flowers ſhould not be brought home in time!—how many ſleepleſs nights have ſuch weighty conſiderations cauſed!

Another evil which attends them is, that when a thing is paſſionately deſired, no other pleaſure can be taſted; time ſeems to move with the moſt tedious pace; the days, the hours, the moments, are reckoned; langour and laſſitude ſucceed; they ſcarcely exiſt, or exiſt in miſery.

There are no anticipations agreeable but thoſe of pleaſures innocent and pure: theſe are deſired without eagerneſs, expected without

without agitation, enjoyed with delight, and leave behind them the ſweeteſt recollections.

The ſupreme goodneſs of God has placed our happineſs in our own hands: it depends upon our diſpoſitions and habits; and as it is always poſſible for us to correct our errrors, conſequently we have it in our power to become happy. I know there may be real ſorrows which we muſt feel, be our minds ever ſo well regulated: ſuch as, the phyſical ſufferings of ourſelves or friends, or the loſs of objects deſervedly dear to us; but in general theſe ſorrows are neither frequent nor common; they may be ſoftened, and even conquered by religion; and they only form ſome gloomy and thinly ſcattered epochas in our lives: whilſt the miſeries cauſed by our own errors are daily and perpetually renewed; and are ſo much the more cruel, as we have neither the right to complain of, nor the conſolation to be pitied for them.

What is there wanting to render Julia perfectly happy; ſhe is bleſt with amiable and tender parents, whoſe fortune is ample, who have a fine park, and beautiful gar-

dons: Julia poſſeſſes a great ſhare of ſprightlineſs, and an excellent heart; ſhe is neither vain, envious, nor indocile; no little girl of nine years old can have more intelligence, or ſhew greater diſpoſitions to learn: Julia however is not happy: the reaſon is, ſhe is capricious and inconſtant; this hour ſhe will be all warmth and fondneſs, the next frozen as ice. Steady and unchangeable in her affections, in her taſtes ſhe is fickle in the extreme; what pleaſed her to exceſs yeſterday, to-day appears quite inſipid to her; in ſhort, ſhe is governed by whim. She paſſes one half of her life in enthuſiaſm and the greateſt activity, the other in apathy and indolence. This inequality, this fault of character of courſe retards her progreſs, and is alike hurtful to the cultivation of her mind and to her happineſs; ſhe is often diſcontented with herſelf—a real misfortune to thoſe born with good diſpoſitions: but at her age it is eaſy to correct theſe wrong propenſities. Were Julia to employ her natural good ſenſe in reaſoning and reflection, ſhe would ſoon be ſenſible of all the bad conſequences which muſt reſult from this turn of mind; ſhe

ſhe would form the reſolution of attaching herſelf to employments worthy of her real character; ſhe would determine to purſue them with unremitting application, in ſpite of any trifling diſguſts ſhe might at firſt experience; ſhe would make a vow that ſhe would get the better of all her frivolous caprices, and ſhe would find that each virtuous effort made for this purpoſe, far from being a painful ſacrifice, would be a joyful victory, for which ſhe would applaud herſelf: in a word, ſhe would make it an invariable rule never to admire or diſlike without reflection and examination; to ſuſpend all her judgments, whether of blame or approbation, till maturely weighed; and ſhould any new object of attachment preſent itſelf, however rational or ſolid, to yield to it only by degrees and with moderation, and not to the excluſion of other objects or of any uſeful purſuits which ſhe has been taught to cultivate. Julia will then make a rapid and ſurpriſing progreſs in every charming attainment, ſhe will be eſtimable, admirable, and truly happy.

Without

Without regularity, method, and perſeverance, with all the talents, all the quickneſs of perception in the world, you will never riſe above mediocrity, never arrive at any thing praiſe-worthy, never ſucceed in any thing deſirable.

Good ſenſe, happy diſpoſitions, and natural talents, are much leſs rare than a ſteady perſeverance. This quality beſpeaks an elevated and noble mind. Conſtancy is the neceſſary and inſeparable companion of virtue; inconſtancy, one of the attributes of vice; ever wandering in its purſuits, ever perplexed; whether deceiving or deceived, vice is inceſſantly changing; ever ſtraying from one falſe pleaſure to another, it paſſes by turns from illuſion to diſguſt, from vain deſires to ſatiety.

Though we ſhould have no other quality in common with people of depraved minds, yet ſhall we reſemble them in many points, if we are continually changing our opinions, taſtes, connexions, and manner of life.

J. J. Rouſſeau has ſaid, that giddy children never turn out men beyond mediocrity; this is, I think, a judgment much too ſevere;

fevere; for giddineſs is a fault very natural to their age, and which it is eaſy to correct where there is good ſenſe and docility: but there is a fault of much more evil preſage, and that is, exceſſive volubility; I have never yet ſeen a very talkative child become a perſon of ſolid ſenſe. To have the mania of talking inceſſantly is a certain means of uttering a great deal of nonſenſe; becauſe we do not take time to reflect on what we are about to ſay. Never to liſten, or to liſten with inattention, or an impatience which the deſire of ſpeaking in turn inſpires, is to loſe one of the ſureſt means of inſtruction and improvement. Thus this rage for ſpeaking continually proves not only that a child has no ſenſe, but if not corrected in time, it will indubitably prevent his acquiring any, that is, it will put a ſtop to the extending and perfecting the noble gift of reaſon.

Roſalind has juſt entered into her twelfth year; ſhe gives the promiſe of many excellent qualities, and a great deal of intelligence; ſhe poſſeſſes every thing that can make her amiable; but her eternal babble renders her often inſupportable to thoſe by whom

whom she is most beloved; judge then of the effect it must have on people who are uninterested about her! she asks a hundred questions in a quarter of an hour, but never stops to listen to the answers; she enters into long stories, crowded with minute circumstances; she tells them without spirit and without grace, because she tells them only for the sake of talking; she speaks quick, and often unintelligibly so, in order, not that she may express more matter, but that she may pronounce more words; she resembles those bad extempore rhimers*, whose sole talent consists in speaking without interruption, and in never being at a loss for words. Perpetually talking, and never giving herself time to reflect, she is always saying something misplaced and ridiculous; she uses repetitions without perceiving it; and gets entangled in absurdities of which she is unconscious; she wearies her auditors to death while she supposes she is amusing them.

* *Improvisateurs*, here rendered extempore rhimers, are people who engage to speak for a long time together in verse, without thinking beforehand what they shall say. A subject is given them, and they speak on that subject only as long as they are required; generally much longer.

them, and sometimes meets with rather rough interruptions; these she looks upon as pleasantries, laughs at the jest, and continues to talk. From all the blunders she commits, and the rebuffs she meets with, people who do not know her conclude that she is as deficient in understanding as she is tiresome in conversation: this is by no means the case; she has natural good sense, but she degrades it, and must in time totally lose it if she does not quickly correct a fault not only prejudicial in itself, but which leads to others much more serious in their consequences: on a thousand occasions it gives an air of malignity where it does not exist; produces gossiping, which necessarily leads to detraction, and in the end to depravity; besides all this, it deprives a young person of that dignified exterior, that withdrawing modesty, for which no other grace can compensate.

Betsey, who is the same age of Rosalind, is no babbler, but she is a *wag*, and piques herself on being so; in my opinion a most silly and dangerous character for a child. Betsey imagines that nothing displays more grace, nor produces more pleasantry, than

to

to torment every body about her with a thouſand impertinencies committed on purpoſe to thwart and provoke them; and that to ſhew a great deal of malice beſpeaks an infinity of wit. Does ſhe ſee any one fall, ſhe laughs aloud; aſk from her any little piece of ſervice, ſhe promiſes it, only with the intention of *playing a trick*; beg of her to do one thing, ſhe will do another the direct contrary: inſiſt on her being a little ſerious and ſilent, ſhe burſts into fits of laughter, and makes the moſt hideous uproar. Her little ſiſter Nancy ſeconds her to the beſt of her power in all her witty exploits; Nancy being only ſeven years old cannot be ſuppoſed capable of giving variety to her *waggeries*: hitherto ſhe has confined herſelf to hiding behind a folding door, to ſtrike at any one who goes in or out, or to catch and drag them by the cloathes which ſhe often tears; ſhe can alſo kick at her little companions under a table, or pinch them at a moment when they leaſt expect it: this is all ſhe can at preſent accompliſh, but time, and the example of her ſiſter will do the reſt.

The

The names of *wag* and *bug bear* flatter Betſey infinitely; ſhe takes theſe epithets for praiſes; and has no idea that when ſhe is ſpoken of when her parents are not preſent, ſhe is called odious, and even wicked.

Generally little girls who are *wags*, grow up with pretenſions to the character of *wits** ; that is to ſay, they become capricious and overbearing, for this is the conſequence of the falſe idea which people void of ſenſe and reflection annex to this word. With this ridiculous perſuaſion they are by ſyſtem rude, ſatyrical, fantaſtic, ſupercilious, whimſical, and all with the vain hope of appearing ſuperiorly charming.

It is an aſtoniſhing abſurdity to deſire to gain all hearts and turn all heads, and to ſuppoſe that the beſt means to ſucceed in

* It requires genius, grace, and a ſort of originality in the ideas to become what is called a *perſon of wit*. La Bruyere, of all the authors I know, poſſeſſes the greateſt ſhare of wit; he is alſo the moſt judicious, and moſt thoroughly rational; at the ſame time his enchanting book abounds with traits of ſentiment.

People who confound every thing imagine they poſſeſs wit when they are faſtidious and capricious: this definition is as ridiculous as erroneous.

this

this is to vex and contradict, to torment, and be impertinent. Zelia has ideas more juſt; ſhe is ſenſible that in ſociety to enſure real and laſting approbation, it is neceſſary for a young perſon to be good natured, mild, obliging, and civil; ſhe always preſerves the ſame temper, the ſame tone, the ſame manners; and it would be a pity ſhe ſhould change them, as ſhe muſt only loſe by doing ſo. Her amiable diſpoſition makes her take part in all the joys of others, as her good heart makes her a ſharer in all their pains; ſhe conſoles the afflicted, by ſympathizing ſincerely with them; ſhe adds to the agreeableneſs of a party of pleaſure, by entering into all the amuſements of the ſociety which compoſe it. Her gentle gaiety, her natural politeneſs, her perfect equality of temper, renders her the moſt charming of little girls; only ſeeing her occaſionally ſhe pleaſes and intereſts univerſally, but ſhe is adored by thoſe with whom ſhe lives, and who know her beſt.

Of all the little girls I have ever met with, ſhe who appeared to me the moſt completely ridiculous was the young Aminia, who, when I left her native country, had attained

attained her thirteenth year. Aminia was then beautiful as an angel, and her parents were highly diſtinguiſhed by their birth, rank, and fortune. Aminia praiſed, flattered, idolized, had acquired an intolerable degree of vanity. Whether you ſaw her only for a moment, or ſtudied her character for entire months, you could diſcover but two points in it; the higheſt opinion of herſelf, and moſt ſovereign contempt for others: though intoxicated with the conſciouſneſs of her charms, ſhe could not preciſely be pronounced a coquette; ſhe had no deſire to pleaſe, becauſe ſhe believed ſhe was certain of bearing away the palm from all competitors. She dreſſed, to diſplay her riches and magnificence, not to adorn herſelf; for ſhe was convinced that nothing could add to her charms. She received with indifference the moſt extravagant praiſes, not looking upon them either as flatteries or exaggerations: ſhe believed herſelf ſo ſuperior to the reſt of the human race, that neither applauſes nor cenſures could gratify or offend her. Nothing could be more perfectly beautiful than her face, from the brilliancy of complexion, delicacy, and regularity

gularity of features; yet no face so fine has ever been so little admired, owing to the odious expression of pride and haughtiness which her countenance constantly wore. Often when out of the circle of her intimate society, people have endeavoured to make her feel how very impertiment and ridiculous they thought her; often has she found herself neglected, and heard herself the subject of the severest criticisms; but these proofs of dislike excited neither surprise nor chagrin; she attributed them to envy, and contented herself with shrugging up her shoulders, and smiling disdainfully. Her politeness had in it always something cold and repulsive, and she meant it should be so; she would not have denied to practise the forms prescribed by etiquette, only as a means to keep the *vulgar* at a respectful distance. With such dispositions it is no wonder that Aminia was detested, made the constant object of ridicule, and from being shunned by society became a burthen to herself.

From a traveller whom I met with some time since, I have learned the sequel of the story of Aminia. Her parents, from extravagance and other causes were involved in

in ruin, and with their fortune diſappeared that crowd of adulators honored with the title of *intimate friends:* long and ſevere indiſpoſition had robbed Aminia of that rare beauty of which ſhe was ſo vain: theſe combined circumſtances have led to ſerious reflection; ſhe has attended to the cultivation of her mind, ſhe is become modeſt and rational. What thanks does ſhe not owe to Fortune, who in thus depriving her of frivolous advantages, has replaced them with thoſe which are real and ſolid?

I ſhall finiſh this little gallery of pictures in miniature, with the portrait of one of my friends who is only twelve years old. It will occur to my reader no doubt that her age is not very ſuitable to mine; but I have always found ſo much candour and affection, and ſo much fidelity in my young friends! and have often met with ſo much inconſtancy or treachery in friends of fifty years old, that I have determined henceforward to attach myſelf only to youth and infancy; to whom beſides I have conſecrated ſo many of the beſt years of my life, my watchings, my cares, and my labours.

My

My amiable and dear Theodosia has passed all her life in the country, far from great artists and the master-pieces of the arts; she has no brilliant accomplishments, she does not sing, nor play upon any instrument; she dances only with gaiety and agility, but without any scientific rules; she has never learned to draw, but she has a natural taste, and persevering patience; she is fond of flowers, and though she has never had any other lessons than some hints from her friends, she has succeeded in painting them in a very pleasing manner. She has, besides, the address of a fairy in every thing she does, and whatever comes from her hands has a peculiar elegance, which is also observable in her manner of dressing herself, though nobody in the world spends less time at the toilette than she does.

Theodosia has a mind so cultivated, a memory so well stored, and so much good sense when it is necessary she should display it, that in conversing seriously with her, you absolutely forget her age; at the same time she never has an air of pedantry or self-sufficiency; ever ready to be silent and to listen, or to mingle in conversation when it

is

is wiſhed ſhe ſhould take a part in it. She has wonderful information for her age, becauſe ſhe reads a great deal, and is never aſhamed to aſk an explanation of paſſages ſhe does not underſtand, or underſtands but imperfectly. Ever natural and ſincere, ſhe never admires on the word of others. If ſhe hears an expreſſion praiſed which is beyond her comprehenſion, ſhe does not ſay, merely to echo the opinion of the reſt of the company, *that is charming*; ſhe remains ſilent on the ſubject till ſhe finds herſelf alone with her parents, or with ſome friend elder than herſelf, and then aſks for an explanation of what had puzzled her. Many young perſons are ſo ſervile or ſo ſilly as to laugh at or applaud things which they do not at all underſtand, only becauſe they ſee others laugh and applaud; this Theodoſia is never guilty of, and this alone makes her looked up to in ſociety; her ſmile and approbation naturally ſtamp a value where they are beſtowed, as it is known that ſhe feels every thing ſhe expreſſes.

Theodoſia reads no romances, becauſe ſhe has been taught that ſuch ſtudies only tend

tend to hurt a mind not perfectly informed. She has a ſincere wiſh for information and to become eſtimable, and follows with extreme docility the path which her friends have laid out for her, which will aſſuredly conduct her to the end propoſed. Notwithſtanding that in many points her underſtanding is premature, ſhe poſſeſſes all the amiable frankneſs of her age; ſhe does not imagine herſelf a great ſcholar, a prodigy; ſhe is ſenſible of the kind indulgence of her parents in giving her a good education; and inſtead of giving way to ſentiments of preſumption and vanity, this education only inſpires her with the tendereſt gratitude to them: far from deſpiſing children's plays, ſhe finds as much pleaſure in them at ſome times, as ſhe does in application to her ſtudies at others, and her little companions are as highly delighted with her converſation and *manner of playing*, as her inſtructors are ſatisfied with her leſſons.

I love thus to recapitulate all the good qualities of Theodoſia; it is at the ſame time contemplating the actual happineſs which ſhe at preſent enjoys, and that which

ſhe

ſhe prepares for herſelf in future; for with ſuch diſpoſitions ſhe cannot fail of being happy.

CHAP. V.

Of the Heart.

ELEVATED thoughts proceed from the heart; ſo ſays the judicious and profound Vauvenargues*.

M. Marmontel has ſince ſaid with great juſtneſs, that wit has never produced better than pretty things, but that all which is truly beautiful proceeds from the ſoul.

In effect, wit alone, however ſuperior it may be, cannot excite admiration nor inſpire enthuſiaſm.

It is from the ſoul that all thoſe ſublime traits have eſcaped which enchant us in our great writers, in the works of Boſſuet, of Fénelon, of Maſſillon, of Pierre Corneille, of Racine, &c.

* "Thoughts of Vauvenargues."

It appears that what we call *genius*, is nothing more than the union of a penetrating and juſt wit with a great and ſuſceptible ſoul.

It is an error and a folly to believe that a perſon arrived at a reaſonable age, and who is not ſtupid, could be habitually a mocker, a detracter, and a meddler, with an excellent heart; ſuch faults would be quickly and entirely corrected by a good heart.

One of the things which greatly contributes to perpetuate in ſociety the moſt odious broils, bickerings, and malicious tricks, is admitting falſely and fooliſhly that we may inceſſantly do wrong without being wicked. True goodneſs of heart does not always ſecure ourſelves from indiſcretion and imprudence, but it moſt aſſuredly preſerves others from their effects.

A good heart fears to expoſe friends, or to afflict and diſtreſs our fellow creatures. A good heart feels naturally for all others, conſideration, indulgence, and generoſity.

The higheſt panegyric we can beſtow on a great ſoul, is compriſed in the following inconteſtable maxim—that it is impoſſible

to

to be grateful, without poſſeſſing a good heart.

What virtues can we pretend to, whilſt incapable of feeling a lively and conſtant gratitude or a real friendſhip?

No merit, no talents can take place of a good heart.

It is when we have nothing further to hope for or to expect from a benefactor, that demonſtrations of gratitude become proofs of its exiſtence, and that they are noble and touching: we ſhould pay more regard, more reſpect, and attention, to a benefactor who is rendered unhappy by any circumſtances, than we did before he became unfortunate.

There are only two real proofs of what we call a true friendſhip—confidence and being conſtantly attentive to the intereſts and to the happineſs of thoſe we love.

Oh! how ſweet, when we are able to prevent the wiſhes of beloved objects, to conſecrate our time to them, to pour a ſalutary balm into the wounds of their hearts! how naturally we, like all who render them juſtice, are irritated againſt thoſe who prove themſelves their enemies! how eaſy it is

to divine what it may be that will please, console, or be useful to them! how ingenious we are in serving, and rendering them benefits! how active and courageous in their defence! how eloquent and persuasive whilst employed in their justication, or in making their *éloge!*

Julius became a charming child, and he was naturally possessed of numberless faults. Nothing could equal his impetuosity, his obstinacy, and his want of application. One day, whilst playing awkwardly at battle-dore and shuttle-cock, he put himself into a great passion; in vexation he threw out of his hand the racket which he held, at the moment his brother was entering the chamber, who received the racket on his head, and by that means was severely hurt. Julius was greatly affected by the accident, and the deep affliction which he suffered on account of it corrected him for ever of those extravagant transports of anger to which he was very subject. Julius by the same circumstance is corrected of many of his other faults, finding they were the cause of real affliction to those he loved.

To

To profeſs that we have the greateſt eſteem, and to do nothing for the object of our affection, is moſt aſſuredly not to love at all.

Our acts, our ſolicitudes, our ſacrifices, the whole of our conduct is the teſt of friendſhip, not vain words only.

"Had he loved me, I would have cor-"rected him*." This verſe is pretty, becauſe it expreſſes a juſt idea with ſentiment.

Incorrigible children have bad hearts; they are ungrateful towards their friends, their preceptors, and their parents.

To be gentle, tender, and compaſſionate, is the moſt certain ſign of poſſeſſing a good heart.

There is nothing I delight in more, than to obſerve Charles and his little ſiſter Anna when they are at play together; one is nine years old, and the other ſeven. Their natural goodneſs of heart renders them ſo amiable and ſo intereſting! If they have a little diſpute, and Anna begins to cry on

* Liſe ſays this in ſpeaking of young Euphimon, Voltaire's prodigal ſon.

the occaſion, Charles inſtantly embraces her, and does what ſhe wiſhes. And if Charles puts on a ſorry and diſſatisfied air, Anna careſſes him, and ſays, *Do not be diſpleaſed any more.*

One morning Charles had permiſſion to climb a tree, and to gather as much of the fruit as he could until he ſhould be called away. Anna placed herſelf at the foot of the tree, ſpreading out her little bib-apron to receive a ſhower of fine cherries, and never ceaſed to praiſe their freſhneſs; ſhe had beſides been promiſed leave to eat ſome during the day. Her little apron was juſt filled, when they heard the ſignal for retreat: Charles immediately deſcended from the tree; at that moment there was paſſing by an old woman who aſked charity, they had no money, and Anna turning towards her brother ſaid, "Oh! Charles, I will give her my part of the cherries.—" "And mine alſo," Charles quickly replied. In ſaying theſe words, he, as well as his ſiſter, took all the cherries they had, and put them into a knapſack which the old woman held. Afterwards, taking each other by the arm, they continued their road towards

towards the houſe. They had only ſome dry bread for breakfaſt, but they thought of the good action they had juſt performed, and did not regret their cherries.—— Never have theſe charming children procured a ſcold or reprimand for any domeſtic; never have their whims or fancies given pain or fatigue to others; they wiſhed very much laſt ſummer, on their mamma's birth-day, to procure a beautiful noſegay of the moſt rare and fineſt flowers that might be had out of the charming gardens of *Krauſe* and *Bouchers* *; but they were very far diſtant from theſe gardens, and the weather was oppreſſively hot; the domeſtics and ſervants had already during the morning executed ſeveral commiſſions, and Charles ſaid, "Theſe poor people will be exceedingly fatigued if we oblige them to go ſo far for the flowers!"—"You are in the right," replied Anna; "we will then be contented with giving mamma all the roſes off my little buſh."

The compaſſion of theſe children extends itſelf even towards animals; their pretty

* Botaniſts and Floriſts at Berlin.

phyſiognomies are expreſſive of chagrin and pity whenever they hear a dog cry or ſee him beaten.

One day Anna caught a pretty butterfly: "Do you know," ſaid Charles, "that you make it ſuffer?"

As ſoon as Anna heard this, ſhe opened her fingers and let the poor butterfly have its liberty.

Who would not love Charles and Anna?

CHAP. VI.

Of little Boys.

GOODNESS, modeſty, application, and courage; theſe are qualities a little boy ſhould poſſeſs, and diſplay, in order to make himſelf amiable.

Preſumption and effrontery are odious at every age, but above all in youth; it is monſtrous in little girls, and alſo extremely hateful in little boys.

Adrian, at twevle years and a half old, has wit, a well exerciſed memory, and a great

great deal of taſte for literature; he is already of *the ſociety of authors*; he knows perfectly the meaſure of verſes; he knows the rules tolerably well, and has even compoſed ſeveral little pieces of poetry.

All this would be very pretty, if Adrian did only render himſelf juſtice, and believe that with time, ſtudy, and advice he might one day or other have talents in that way; but Adrian at the preſent imagines himſelf a poet, and a very excellent poet; this is an error, and at the ſame time ridiculous.

La Grange Chancel, when only eight years of age, compoſed the bad tragedy of *Jugurtha**. This was in fact a ſurpriſing thing at his age; but the author placed at the end of his letter the extravagant encomiums he had received on the ſubject; he thought his work was in itſelf a maſterpiece; he had not ſenſe enough to know that its great ſucceſs was owing to his age; his head was turned with pride; he ceaſed any more to conſult, to ſtudy; preſuming upon his genius, his taſte was corrupted; and this preſumption placed him for ever

* It is printed in his works.

in the loweſt claſs of tragic writers and poets.

I do not think Adrian's poetical career will be more brilliant; I agree that he may go pretty far in it, but vanity will limit his courſe; and we never even attain mediocrity whilſt we fooliſhly imagine we have arrived at perfection.

Adrian already *gives lectures*; what can be more laughable, or to expreſs it better, what can be more lamentable, than to ſee a child come forward with a pedantic and preſumptuous air, impoſing ſilence on an aſſembly, draw from his pocket a manuſcript, and read with confidence a chapter, or moral fables?

Where have you learned, Adrian, all theſe ſentiments which you cannot have experienced, and theſe reflections on a world which you do not know at all, or deſcriptions of things that you have neither ſtudied nor ſeen?

Where have you learned all this? I know; in the works of our great poets; for I recognize in yours, many things, many verſes from recollection! You have only the ingenious invention of diſguiſing and changing

changing ſome of the words; youlet the ſenſe remain, and preſerve the meaſure; but your variations take from them all the charms of harmony. You diſfigure them only, without poſſeſſing the art of rendering them unknown. That long ſpeech for which you have juſt been applauded, is ſtolen from Boileau; the verſe you have juſt pronounced with ſuch emphaſis, is borrowed from Greſſet; that other which you have been made to repeat three times over is from the poem of the Gardens; this laſt alſo is taken from the *Windſor Foreſt**.

I do not ſay Adrian that you ſhould renounce poetry, for you have an [redacted] and diſpoſition for it; and it is very well to cultivate talents for which we poſſeſs naturally a real taſte; but recollect the height of your vanity; have ſenſe enough to bluſh for it, and to abjure it for ever. You may ſay your verſes are now praiſed, becauſe you are only twelve years of age; and that many of your flatterers, who in the midſt of your family make many of theſe encomiums, ridicule you often even there, and do not be in ſuch haſte to ſhew you them. Be

* Of M. de Boisjolin.

perſuaded

perſuaded that at your age your productions can be no other than feeble, incorrect, ſuperficial, and very middling; recall the modeſty moſt becoming to you, and that will be acquiring reaſon and taſte. Study, compare, work in ſilence and ſecret under the eyes of a proper gide; after ſome years, ſubmit your works to more enlightened cenſors; ſeek not deceitful and inſipid praiſes, but knowledge and uſeful counſels; and I predict for you that one day you may in reality poſſeſs very diſtinguiſhed talents.

It has been remarked that forward children, that is to ſay thoſe who have extraordinary minds and underſtandings for their ages, are almoſt generally, in ſucceeding time, but of very middling powers.

Minds faſhioned by praiſes and pride will by corrupting their judgment and diſcernment, raiſe many invincible barriers to the free progreſs of their ſenſe and reaſon; ſo that very witty ingenious children uncorrupted by vanity, will certainly become very ſuperior men: ſuch have been Paſcal, Pope, and ſeveral others.

If we have cauſe to ridicule Adrian's vanity, what can we ſay of Erneſt, who is abſolutely

abſolutely not well founded on any ſubject? Erneſt is the moſt vain of all children, and on what account? has he more wit? is he more inſtructed, more advanced, than his little companions? not at all. Erneſt is very limited, he fails in point of memory, and is not apt at any thing. What then makes him wear that air of ſuperiority which we at firſt remark in him? do you not ſee? Erneſt is pretty and dances perfectly well.——You ſaid that Erneſt was a ſimpleton, and on this reſpect we can have no doubts. A man to ſet a value on his figure! a man to pride himſelf on dancing finely! a man to place himſelf in the claſs of the moſt ſilly and deſpicable women!——Why all this ſurpriſe and theſe exclamations! what we call a fop, one of that degenerated contemptible claſs of beings, are they then ſo rare? have you never met with ſuch?——But a foppiſh child—and what is the foppery of men of thirty? no other than a perpetual childhood and ſtupidity, an infancy without the graces and ingenuous manners attendant on that age; an infancy which offers no ray of hope, but which

which for ever only preſerves ignorance and inſignificance.

See with how much pride Erneſt makes his different ſteps, his *bounds*, *coupees*, and *croſs capers*; what an air of importance he puts on at the ball; what contemptuous looks he caſts towards the little boys who are confuſed in the figures of the dances; with what height and ſelf ſufficiency he aſks the little girls to dance with him, always chooſing thoſe who are the beſt dreſſed; and what an honor does he think he is beſtowing on them! ſee how he over-heats himſelf, how he pants for breath, how his heart palpitates, whilſt he believes he attracts the attention of the ſpectators; ſee with what deciſion, what deſpotiſm, he commands the orcheſtra; he alone chooſes and calls the country dances; he alone directs the muſicians, and preſcribes the movements they ſhould follow. Erneſt has juſt paſſed his eleventh year; very well! If he is not corrected of his foppery he will never alter, excepting in form and ſtature, until he has attained five and twenty years. He may be guilty of many more vices, but he will experience all the ſame emotions; he will

will retain his former taſtes; he will wear the ſame countenance; he will be equally ſilly and impertinent; he will not be in poſſeſſion of one more rational idea; he will have grown larger and taller; and that will be the only alteration in him.

How very different is the character of Edgar from that of Erneſt, although theſe two children are of an age!

Edgar is as beautiful as an angel; but far from being ſo fooliſh as to be proud of this trifling advantage, he is really aſhamed of poſſeſſing the complexion of the roſe and the lily united which he fears will give him an effeminate air; he does all he can to become brown; he expoſes himſelf inceſſantly to the heat and beams of the ſun, on purpoſe, he ſays, to attain the ruddy hue more natural for a man. He has the fineſt hair in the world, and he begs as a favour that it may be cut, becauſe it takes up too much time to have it combed; beſides, he thinks a man's dreſſing ſhould be finiſhed in a few minutes. He generally makes choice of the moſt ſimple habits; he likes dancing as a very agreeable amuſement in ſociety for young people, but not for the ſake of ſhining

ſhining; he does not think it a ſtudy ſufficiently important to know how to do all the moſt difficult and extraordinary ſteps; he has not the deſire of one day equalling *Veſtris*, *Gardel*, or *Nivelon*; but he dances with grace and activity, and without any pretenſion; this renders his manner of dancing more univerſally preferred to that of other dancers more ſtudied or more famous in ſociety.

Edgar places his vanity in profiting by a good education which he has received, in becoming learned and enlightened, in ſhewing his gratitude, his courage, and his application. Thus Edgar as he grows up will indeed become a man.

Anthony his brother poſſeſſes the ſame virtues. I have never ſeen a child born with ſuch an averſion, ſuch a natural horror and antipathy to all that is vicious. I have never ſeen one who, during the whole courſe of his education, has more conſtantly proved a grateful and ſincere ſubmiſſion and reſpect towards the perſon charged with his tuition. Theſe are moſt certain marks of an excellent character. The two brothers have ſtill an elder one, of whom I

ſhall

ſhall not ſpeak. Alas! what could I ſay? for he is ungrateful. Children ſhould diſplay at leaſt the ſeeds of all thoſe qualities which render grown up people eſtimable. Thus a little boy who is *fearful* and a poltroon, would inſpire the greateſt contempt, if we did not know that in the happy period of early youth we may correct the greateſt faults imaginable,

Courage is neceſſary both for men and women; whatever may be the ſex, a puſillanimous character is vicious, and extremely to be pitied; but courage for men is a diſtinct virtue, abſolutely indiſpenſable; a man who is a poltroon is the opprobrium of his own ſex, and rejected by ours.

He who governs ſhould be the protector of beings committed to his care, or elſe he is only an odious tyrant.

He whoſe portion is ſtrength, ſhould for the ſame reaſon be the defence of the weak.

He who commands and directs, ſhould poſſeſs knowledge; a man therefore ſhould be courageous, generous, and learned.

An ignorant man who fails in courage, cannot fulfil the duties for which he was deſtined.

deſtined. He is no longer a man; he is even beneath the leaſt eſtimable of women.

As ſoon as we poſſeſs the virtues ſuitable to our ſex, and the knowledge neceſſary for our ſtation, we are reſpectable, but only ſo on theſe conditions.

A virtuous and induſtrious artiſan who underſtands his trade well, is worthy of the higheſt eſteem.

A man of an elevated rank ſhould have his mind well cultivated; and thoſe who occupy eminent and diſtinguiſhed ſituations in ſociety, ſhould have a knowledge ſtill more extenſive.

It is only thus that the ſuperiority of one ſex over another, or of the great over the little, can be either reaſonable or real.

The order and tranquillity of ſociety is conſequently a ſacred duty, exacting always on our part thoſe deferences and that exterior obedience to the laws and covenants of the different nations to which we are ſubject.

But the reſpect of the heart is only due and ſhould only be granted to merit; the reſpect which our reaſon approves is the only true flatterer; it honors almoſt equally the

the perſon who approves, and the perſon who inſpires that ſentiment.

Birth, fortune, and rank, are far alſo from placing us beyond the trouble of learning and inſtruction; thoſe brilliant advantages the rather impoſe the latter as indiſpenſable obligations.

If you deſire to wear the robe, ſtudy the laws and men; ſtrive to become a great orator, or you will make but a bad magiſtrate.

If you wiſh to enter into commerce, learn then the ſcience of calculation; take up a ſpirit of order and exactneſs; become frugal, patient, and induſtrious; or if not, conſequently a diſgraceful bankruptcy will overthrow all your ſpeculations.

If you have a taſte for the army, acquire all the knowledge neceſſary to form a great general; it ſhould be vaſt and extenſive; and do not omit to ſtudy thoroughly the different branches of the ſciences. Muſt not you know the hiſtory of all conquerors, and deteſt them; alſo that of the defenders and deliverers of their country, on purpoſe to imitate their greatneſs? Should you not ſtudy the ſeveral treatiſes on tactics, and

all

all the particular memoirs of the moſt celebrated warriors? Accuſtom yourſelf to all hardſhips, and to ſobriety; for the ſouls of heroes can never inhabit enervated and effeminate bodies.

And you, Marcellus, you talk of one day commanding a regiment, and you lie in beds of down: you fear to face the ſun, the ſnow, and the wind: you are afraid of bats, cats, and it is even ſaid, that you ſhudder at the ſight of a ſpider! What! in future when you may be mounting a breach, the ſight of a little poor inſect will be ſufficient to make you recoil and turn pale! You are beſides idle and indolent to an extreme; you learn nothing; you believe that a military man has no occaſion for inſtruction, whilſt birth and favor aſſure him from his infancy the poſſeſſion of a regiment. But your ſoldiers will deſpiſe, and your enemy get the better of you: from this neither your alliances nor family credit will be able to preſerve you.

Do not imagine then, that to be diſtinguiſhed in the career you are about to enter, it is only neceſſary three times in the week to practiſe ſome ſhort exerciſes with a ſerjeant,

a ſerjeant, to carry over your ſhoulder a little paper gun, and to go once a-year to a review, with that little ſhort uniform which you wear with ſo ſerious a deportment, and in which you imagine yourſelf to be a young *Scipio* or a young *Turenne*, if you have any idea of ſuch perſonages.

If we wait to fix on a ſtation in life, until we be of an age capable of reflecting ſolidly on their different advantages, we act with a prudence very praiſe-worthy; but even then it is ſtill neceſſary we ſhould ſtudy in infancy; and during our youth, our ſtudies ſhould be various and extenſive, to the end that we may be better acquainted with our diſpoſitions, and be able to ſettle the ſort of occupation for which we find we poſſeſs the greateſt taſte and aptneſs. Nothing then can excuſe us from ſtudy; nothing, above all in men, can authoriſe effeminacy and ignorance; every thing on the contrary preſcribes to them activity and the love of labour.

Again, liberality is an indiſpenſable virtue in men. Avarice, always odious, appears even leſs excuſable in men than women, becauſe men are born to be the poſſeſſors and

and proprietors of large fortunes, of which women in general have only the charge and care of economizing; as it is a duty to manage with exceſſive diligence whatever does not belong to ourſelves, and moreover whatever has been confided to our truſt; it appears that what is called parſimony in women is nothing more than an exceſs of probity; alſo according to common opinion, it is part of a woman's merit to be what is called a *good houſewife*. All vice is hateful, and I do not certainly pretend to vindicate avarice in women, but I ſay this vice in the eyes of reaſon is ſtill more odious in men, and it is monſtrous in a child. I know nothing which takes ſo much from the charms attached to youth as a premature avarice. It is frightful to ſee a child occupied with the cares of accumulating and amaſſing, preſerving their careleſſneſs and ſtupidity at the ſame time; this is, in fine, poſſeſſing only a ſorrowful inſtinct and foreſight—the fear of coming to want.

Stephen is only nine years old; he is gentle, ſtudious, diſcreet, ſincere; one fault only tarniſhes all his good qualities; Stephen is avaricious. If he be preſented with

with a plaything, he takes ſuch care of it that he does not amuſe himſelf with it; he is not contented with locking it up; he hides it, fearing to be robbed.

If he receive cakes and fruit, he does not offer them to any perſon; he even denies himſelf this pleaſure; he reſerves them for another day, but for himſelf only: and the fruit ſpoils. He enjoys nothing, obliges nobody, and all he poſſeſſes ſerves but to cauſe him the moſt wearisome inquietude.

More advanced miſers have the ſame privations, experience the ſame pains.

To correct Stephen, he muſt be taught that this is a diſgraceful and ridiculous vice to which he gives himſelf up; a real folly, which proceeds from the great error of being perſuaded that the goods of this world are able to procure a happineſs entirely ſeparate, that is to ſay, a happineſs independent of others. But this pretended happineſs is indeed chimerical; it is as extravagant as it is culpable to ſeek for it: no miſer, no ſelfiſh perſon, has ever found it, nor will ever find it, becauſe it does not exiſt. Would you taſte of true joy at your table,

table, the moſt exquiſite meats, the choiceſt wines cannot procure it for you without an amiable companion. To know the full value of what we poſſeſs, to enjoy it really, we muſt partake it with others; this is a decree of Providence which is irrevocable.

But how ſhall a child learn to cure himſelf of avarice? He muſt abſolutely prohibit himſelf the mania of heaping up ſtores and collections of proviſions; he muſt impoſe a law upon himſelf of *uſing* what he may have, that is to ſay, enjoying what he may reſerve to himſelf after dividing his ſuperfluity with others; in fine, he muſt often ſee and ſearch for thoſe unfortunate objects who want every neceſſary. By conducting himſelf thus, he will ſoon loſe an unworthy and deſpicable habit; his heart will give way to the gentle pleaſure of obliging in ſociety, of inſpiring benevolence and eſteem, and in diffuſing amongſt the unfortunate from the depths of his heart, comfort and conſolation.

Mathew is not avaricious, he is only a *gourmand*; but he is ſo to an exceſs; he is not even aſhamed of it; he boaſts of it; and is the firſt to turn it into pleaſantry.

He has neither wit nor ſoul enough to feel that he ought rather to bluſh at ſuch a vice, and that not doing ſo adds another, more inexcuſable to his liſt. We can eaſily pardon eating a great deal in very young infants, but as ſoon as the firſt epocha of infancy is paſſed, that vice becomes very groſs and diſguſting, and bears the character of meanneſs. An unreaſonable *gourmand* finiſhes by rendering himſelf moſt deſpicable; infallibly deſtroying his health; and we muſt all agree in allowing this to be a diſgraceful manner of ſhortening our days. J. J. Rouſſeau ſays, "*Gluttony is the vice "of vulgar ſouls.*" I knew a young man who, after hearing this maxim recited, corrected himſelf for ever of gluttony; but this youth has naturally excellent and elevated ſentiments.

Young Simon is in his fourteenth year, and would already be very amiable, if he did not appear by his tone and manners infinitely below his age; he is what is called a *downright monkey*; and what is worſe, he affects to be ſo. He is not a malicious rogue, but he never for one inſtant wears a rational or compoſed countenance; we

ſee him always *climbing*, *leaping*, *gambolling*; he replies to a ſerious queſtion by tumbling head over heels; he interrupts converſation by an air on his fife or beating his tambourine; if any one has the complaiſance to play with him, he will never give over; he wiſhes always to continue jeſting, to laugh, and to make others laugh. He is pretty; he has grace and wit; his ſallies are often happy, but more frequently they are miſplaced; and he is exceſſively tireſome and importunate; he is miſtaken with regard to himſelf; for, according to the general cuſtom, all thoſe who go to his father's houſe, do not ſay what they really think of him; on the contrary they repeat "*how* "*charming he is*," and that "*his gaiety is* "*extremely graceful.*" They flatter him, and conſequently he is deceived: gaiety is only amiable when it is well placed, moderate, and when it does not entirely exclude reaſon. A child ſhould play, and may be waggiſh with his companions during the hours of recreation; but this ſort of gaiety is neither ſuitable nor agreeable in a ſaloon, or in the midſt of a large circle of friends; above all, when a child is twelve or thirteen

years

years old.—A leſs noiſy and more ingenious play would become very inſipid if it were continued for the ſame length of time; beſides, buffoonery always carries with it an ignoble air, which muſt diſpleaſe all people of good taſte.—A young man who laughs and jeſts with every one, who does not know how to be ſerious for a moment, who cannot attend nor ſpeak rationally on any ſubject, ſuch a young man, whatever may be his natural ſenſe, will only appear capable of becoming a ſtage dancer or figurante.

The cauſes for young Simon's taking up theſe bad habits are, the lively impreſſions he has received of the many ridiculous points in the character of his couſin Flaccour. Flaccour is extremely pedantic. He is compoſed and prepared in all that he ſays and all that he does. Although he is only fourteen years old, he will no longer play with his companions, not that he is more rational, but becauſe he is more dull and aukward than any of them; he thinks himſelf a *finiſhed man*, and ſupports this pretence with ſuch heavineſs, and at the ſame time ſo much ſelf-ſufficiency, that he

wearies all the world, and loads himſelf with the ridicule of others. Flaccour is a great politician; he has ſtored his memory with an infinity of common place ſayings, with worn out maxims and contradictions, *upon the rights of men and the different forms of governments:* he debates on theſe ſubjects with a ſententious tone, and ſays gravely, *my political opinions*, &c. I confeſs I prefer Simon, who whenever he is aſked whether he is a *democrate* or an *ariſtocrate*, replies only by counterfeiting the cat or the ſheep, and mews and bleats during a quarter of an hour.

"A youth who ſpeaks in the ſtyle of a "Catonian is in my opinion moſt truly "laughable: in him I would prefer the air of ſimplicity, to that of learning*."

I neither like the one nor the other, but if a choice muſt be made, who would heſitate?

However, Simon has been very wrong to avoid one folly by falling into its oppoſite extreme; for it is a want of ſenſe to think it neceſſary to diſplay folly and extra-

* Voltaire.

vagance,

vagance, in order not to be accuſed of pedantry and affectation; nature and ſimplicity are only amiable when they are joined to politeneſs, reaſon and decency.

Hippolitus diſplays a character which will in future render him extremely agreeable in ſociety, and which will procure him many true friends; the principal qualities he happily poſſeſſes are, an obliging temper and diſcretion. He has an inviolable integrity, never revealing a ſecret confided to him; real diſcretion impoſes even more extenſive obligations: but Hippolitus will never repeat what his parents, and his intimate friends have ſaid amongſt themſelves before him; he never recites the criticiſms of others on the ſlighteſt matter; he has not the puerile vanity of wiſhing to appear inſtructed in the ſecrets of his acquaintance; he does not ſeek to find them out, if he is ignorant of them; and when he does know them, he keeps them with a ſcrupulous fidelity. Hippolitus knows that a ſecret may be betrayed without ſpeaking, and that often an indiſcreet look, ſmile, or poſture, are as dangerous. Hippolitus is impenetrable, not becauſe he diſſimulates, but be-

cauſe he is neither vain, curious, nor a babbler.

Leopold has one fault which I muſt mention, becauſe it is often common amongſt children.

Leopold in general does not ſpeak more than others in converſation; he is even dry and laconic in his dialogues, but is paſſionately fond of telling ſtories.

A teller of idle ſtories is a miſchievous character: it is my philoſopher* who pronounces this oracle.

Leopold is inceſſantly employed in gathering all the little tales of the neighbourhood, to relate them to whomſoever he may meet. Even a tragical and unfortunate event, if it happen in his pariſh, cauſes him joy, becauſe it furniſhes him with a ſubject of narration; if he be told of the moſt affecting action, he liſtens without the leaſt intereſt, feeling only the pleaſure he promiſes himſelf of relating it over again. If he have good news to announce to any other perſon which he might ſay in two words, he muſt make a long recital;

* La Bruyere.

he

he forgets that he has related on the preceeding evening or in the morning what he repeats; if he be reminded of this he remains in conſternation; but at night, when going to bed, he will not fail to relate it to his ſervant.

Things the moſt marvellous and even void of truth he believes, and wiſhes to believe, in order to relate them as facts; and if it be neceſſary to perſuade belief, he proteſts he is certain of the thing, nor does he heſitate to affirm that he has been witneſs to it: it is thus that people become liars and calumniators.

Irenius has a fault infinitely more excuſable than thoſe of which we have juſt ſpoken. Irenius is timid to an extreme.

Effrontery and ſelf-ſufficiency are odious in both ſexes, and particularly in youth; a moderate ſhare of timidity is becoming to young people; a modeſt countenance and reſerved air are very graceful in men and women of all countries and of every age: but timidity carried too far, is extremely diſagreeable, above all in men.

Extreme timidity is in a manner a failure of courage; for this reaſon it appears abſolutely miſplaced and ridiculous in men.

Irenius is large for his age, he is thirteen, is perfectly well made, and naturally graceful; but the moment he thinks himſelf looked at by any perſon, he becomes remarkably aukward; he puts on a wearied, conſtrained, affected air, and we ſhould no longer know him. He has ſenſe, and in company you would take him for a ſimpleton; he anſwers in a ſilly manner, he bluſhes and grows pale by turns; he is quite diſconcerted without any reaſon; he is fluttered, ſtammers, or elſe giggles, and ſpeaks through his teeth; we cannot tell whether he would be jeſting or not. How often has he been unjuſtly accuſed of impoliteneſs and even impertinence, becauſe he is judged of according to all theſe appearances.

If we ſay a civil thing to him, or pay him any attention, he, through embarraſſment, wears a cold and diſdainful air. If he has a commiſſion to repeat to any body, he ſuppreſſes the half; if he be at table with ſtrangers, he goes without eating

rather

rather than aſk to be helped, and even will not accept what he is offered; in fine, he is always ſurpriſed, frightened, and confounded; conſequently, always uneaſy, diſagreeable, and ridiculous.

A moderate timidity, ſuch as does not prevent a young perſon from ſaying or doing agreeable and convenient things, proceeds from modeſty: but a puerile timidity proceeds from littleneſs of character and ill placed vanity.

They are only thus timid becauſe they attach an importance to the moſt ridiculous and frivolous ſubjects. It is only the fear of appearing awkward or like the common herd, which occaſions this painful embarraſſment and confuſion for the moſt trifling circumſtances. Very well: ſuppoſe your replies ſhould not be deemed very ſtriking, and that you are not generally allowed to enter a room with grace; is there any thing in all this which gives ſuch cauſe for agitation? ſhould we tremble or our blood run cold with ſhame?

It would be likely to be imagined, ſeeing you in this way, that your honor, your future fate, or the happineſs of your life

depended on such consequences and they are only occasioned by replying indifferently to a question proposed, by making a customary compliment, or dancing a minuet!

What signifies on trifles like these the judgment or opinion of people you neither know nor like? You place your vanity so ill, that you like better to pass for disobliging, than to undertake any thing you are not quite sure of performing well. You fear the slightest ridicule, and you despise a blame well founded; but know, that great souls will ever brave ridicule, when the question is to do any thing civil or useful. Get rid of such foolish vanity, and lose this puerile timidity, which is the certain mark of confined sense and a weak character, truly absurd in a man.

A really modest person has none of these vain terrors.

Edmund, with a gentle and reserved air, appears in the midst of the largest society without feeling the smallest embarrassment; he thinks always that he is seldom remarked; his countenance is unaffected; an amiable serenity is depicted on his aspect;

aſpect; he makes no pretenſions; he is quiet; he neither expects praiſe or great ſucceſs, but he depends on the benevolence of others, becauſe he feels this ſentiment towards all men. If they laugh in regarding him, he does not imagine it is to turn him into ridicule, becauſe he himſelf ridicules no perſon. If by chance he makes a blunder, he is the firſt to laugh at it, if he thinks he does not appear diſobliging; if he has to repair a wrong or to return thanks for any benefit received, he knows how to expreſs himſelf and ſay all that is proper. He has great ſenſibility for every thing deſervedly intereſting, and a noble careleſneſs with regard to what is not ſo. It is all one to him whether he be thought to ride gracefully or ungracefully, but he would bluſh to be ſuſpected of fearing to mount a horſe; he never anxiouſly deſires applauſe, but he feels in all inſtances the neceſſity of being eſteemed.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of Mockery.

THE habit of mockery is odious at every age, but above all in children.

Otho at fourteen years old has made himſelf univerſally diſliked, on account of his continual mockeries. Every thing new appears ridiculous in his eyes; and to be placed beyond his cenſure, we ſhould be in all points exactly like thoſe with whom he is moſt familiar. — If a woman ſhould be differently dreſſed from his mother, his ſiſters, or his couſins, ſhe is the ſubject of his ridicule.—If a little boy ſhould have different manners from himſelf, he is then the ſubject of his ridicule. If he obſerves in a ſtrange family cuſtoms different from thoſe of his own, if they ſerve up a *ragoût* which he has never ſeen before; theſe are more ſubjects of mockery for him. Conſequently whenever or wherever he ſees ſtrangers, his manners are intolerable; he finds nothing more ſingular and

and laughable than an Engliſhman who ſpeaks French with an Engliſh accent, and the ſame with regard to a German, an Italian, &c.—Like children in general, his manner of mocking is not very various; it conſiſts in throwing *ſignificant* glances among his companions, and theſe glances are always accompanied with more impertinent than witty ſmiles; or perhaps he giggles, and often laughs aloud, bluntly turning his back. This inſolent folly almoſt always denotes a great ſhare of rudeneſs and malignity.

Oſmund, far from reſembling him, really ſuffers much when he ſees any one do a wrong thing: he never makes a remark, he wiſhes no other to notice it. It is painful to him to behold any one embarraſſed, and he cannot conceive it right to laugh at different dreſſes, words, or attitudes, &c. Otho will have many enemies, and paſs for an ill diſpoſed puppy: Oſmund will be ſought for in ſociety, and moſt deſervedly.

In the world, the moſt ingenious, witty raillery, will not prevent contempt for a character guilty of ſuch things. What then can be thought of children guilty in this

this point, whose puerile ridicule can only extend to things in themselves not at all *ridiculous*; and which is not accompanied with any traits of wit, but limited only to giggling and impertinent airs!

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Employment of Time.

Lord Chesterfield writes thus to his son on the employment of time:

"I am convinced that many people lose "two or three hours each day, because "they neglect the minutes. Never con- "sider any part of time as too short to be "employed; you may always find means "to occupy it by one thing or another."

This is excellent advice, particularly for people of the world. Dissipation causes such an immense waste of time, that if they lose besides all the little intervals which it leaves them at liberty, there will be scarcely any left for study or rational occupations. We ought to accustom ourselves then never to pass an instant in absolute idleness, to have always

always ſome little kind of work prepared for thoſe occaſions which ſo often occur, and which are called *ſpare minutes*. We ought to acquire the habit of reading in a carriage, and while our hair is combed. A very good cuſtom is that of always carrying ſome little book in the pocket. Thoſe pretty editions of ſo ſmall a ſize by Didot ſeem calculated preciſely for that purpoſe. It is true thoſe young ladies who have the rage of *imitating the Grecian ſtatues*, cannot adopt this cuſtom, ſince they wear no pockets*; but thoſe who pique themſelves on

* In thoſe countries, Germany for example, where the women are required to be *good houſe-wives* and even to underſtand cookery, it is ſingular that they ſhould conſent to the *abolition of pockets*, for it is impoſſible thoſe ſhould be good houſe-wives who are continually loſing their handkerchiefs and gloves; who leave their purſes lying about, as well as the keys of their wardrobes, their writing tables, and their caſkets, or elſe are obliged always to confide them to the care of others. They cannot even be ſafe friends; ſince they cannot anſwer for letters or confidential papers. I am likewiſe well convinced, that whatever this mode is

on reſembling the *Dianas* and *Venuſes*, with their *light drapery*, will have very little reliſh for improving their minds. One of the things which occaſions the greateſt loſs of time, is want of regularity; for where that is neglected, half the life is ſpent in ſearching, and ſtill more in fruitleſs vexation — two grievous inconveniences which it would be very eaſy to avoid, by making it a rule to have fixed places for putting every article belonging to us.

It ought further to be recommended to youth to give themſelves a habit of acting in every thing with attention and celerity; ſlowneſs of movement is the occaſion of a vaſt loſs of time. They ought alſo to conſider the different manner of performing all thoſe little things which daily occur, ſuch as folding letters, putting them in their covers, ſealing them, &c. and to prefer that which is moſt prompt in its execution. I

is permanently eſtabliſhed, the women will ceaſe to practiſe regularity and oeconomy. It is thus that often things in themſelves apparently frivolous become from their conſequence of the greateſt importance.

have

have made a curious calculation, of which I ſhall here give an account. It is the cuſtom in France in the direction of letters to write the names of the towns to which they are ſent twice over; a cuſtom which anſwers no purpoſe, as once would do juſt as well*; I have computed that a perſon who ſhould practiſe this cuſtom, and who ſhould write two letters a day, the one addreſſed to Kimpercorentin, the other to Conſtantinople, would find at the end of a year that he had written ſix large pages of theſe names only, which makes *three hours* loſt. I will ſuppoſe that this ſame perſon always directs his letters in the French inſtead of the Engliſh manner; that he uſes wax inſtead of wafers to ſeal them; this in the time taken for the execution, makes the difference of three minutes and a half a day for the two letters, at leaſt if he writes by daylight and lights his taper himſelf; theſe three minutes and a half a day, make *twenty-one* hours loſt at the end of a year, which makes *twenty four* hours when joyned to the three which I

* The ſame thing may be ſaid of the cuſtom of writing twice alſo on the covers of letters, Monſieur, Madame, &c.

before

before mentioned; here are two entire days spent in employments very useless and very tiresome. Were we to pursue this idea; were we to reflect in how many other instances, and even by the slowness of our movements how many occasions, what an infinite number of *minutes* are lost, the calculation would become frightful; we should see that we lose, without either amusement or satisfaction, more than two hours each day, which would amount to above two years in the space of ten, and about fifteen in a long life, that is, from early youth to seventy five years old. Let it be observed besides, that I have taken into this calculation only that time which is merely lost or unprofitably spent; but we ought also to consider as *lost time* that which is spent in unmeaning wishes, which are neither pleasant nor the least useful; and most men waste thus one quarter of their lives: their passions and the vain pursuits of false pleasures generally consume two other quarters; some must also be allowed for physical sufferings and sickness, which few escape; how little then remains to be well employed, that is, in a manner useful either to ourselves or others?

and

and God will demand of us an account of every moment of our lives! How dreadful is this idea even to thoſe who have been virtuous and active, when they allow themſelves to reflect maturely on this important ſubject!

That which occaſions moſt loſs of time to grown perſons, is a paſſion for cabals, and that taſte for goſſiping and buſtle ſo common among them—to children, that idle curioſity which inſpires them with the deſire of knowing all that paſſes, all the little ſecrets of ſociety.

"Thoſe who employ their time ill," ſays La Bruyere, "are the firſt to complain "of the ſhortneſs of its duration; thoſe "on the contrary who make a good uſe of "it, have enough to ſpare."

Albania has a great memory, a vaſt deal of activity, and uncommon ſteadineſs of character; ſhe learns a multitude of things, and is equal to them all; ſhe draws, ſings, plays on the harpſichord, the harp, and guittar; ſhe reads a great deal, makes extracts from what ſhe reads, and poſſeſſes all the information that it is poſſible a girl of thirteen could be miſtreſs of; ſhe underſtands

ſtands French, Engliſh, Spaniſh, and Italian; ſhe embroiders in a ſuperior ſtyle, and executes plain work equally well; it is ſhe who makes all her own clothes; it is ſhe who keeps her mother's houſe, and regulates all the accounts, and who has charge of all the ſtores laid up for family conſumption, of which ſhe alone keeps all the keys; it is ſhe who in the country has the ſuperintendance of preparing apartments for viſitors; who in the time of vintage and harveſt pays the labourers their wages, and preſides over all their rural employments; it is ſhe in fine who, as a recompence for all theſe cares, is charged with the honorable, the ſweet office of diſtributing alms, of ſearching for and viſiting the poor.

How, ſay the indolent and the idle, how can ſhe find time for ſo many employments? I anſwer: firſt, Albania wears pockets; thus Albania's keys are never aſtray; ſhe always carries two little books about her, the one for reading, the other, in which there is a pencil, ſerves her as a memorandum book, an almanac, and for ſetting down any little unforeſeen expences; for thoſe of a more fixed kind ſhe keeps a large accompt-

book

book in her writing-box. Secondly; Albania does every thing with as much diſpatch as addreſs; ſhe has no goſſiping, no frivolous curioſity, nor is ſhe an unmeaning prattler. Thirdly; ſhe is ſo careful, has every thing in her charge arranged in ſuch perfect order, that ſhe never loſes a moment in ſearching for them.

Fourthly; Albania, as I have already ſaid, is ſteady and perſevering; ſhe has fixed *rules for her daily occupations*, which ſhe will allow nothing to derange; all her time is carefully diſtributed and fully employed; even during the ſix months which ſhe paſſes in town, theſe rules are very rarely infringed. Albania limits herſelf to two or three balls during the winter; and never paſſes more than four hours at each; and even on thoſe days ſhe devotes five or ſix hours to ſtudy; for ſhe has formed the reſolution, and ſhe will adhere to it, never during her life to paſs an entire day in diſſipation.

Fifthly and laſtly, Albania is not fond of finery, ſhe diſplays the moſt delicate neatneſs in her apparel, but even on the days of her greateſt dreſs, ſhe never ſpends more

more than three quarters of an hour at her toilette.

At twenty Albania will be a woman of the moſt ſuperior accompliſhments, and will have the happineſs to ſay that, during the whole courſe of her education, ſhe never experienced a ſingle moment of laſſitude or wearineſs; while indolent and inattentive children will be a prey to both, even in the midſt of their plays.

*Laſſitude was introduced into the world by Sloth**. This is a very juſt remark. It has been ſaid that idleneſs is the mother of all the vices; it might have been added, that it is alſo that of the moſt overpowering and inſupportable laſſitude.

The laws of Draco puniſhed idleneſs with death; and a conſiderable penalty was impoſed on ſuch as got beyond a certain degree of corpulency, becauſe it was ſuppoſed that idleneſs and indolence was the occaſion of it.

Solon decreed infamy as the puniſhment of idleneſs; and deprived him who had neglected to give his ſon a trade, of that aſſiſtance which he might have expected in

* La Bruyere.

in his old age; but that which, abo
ought to inſpire the chriſtian with
tempt and abhorrence of idleneſs,
in the books of holy writ no vice i
expreſsly condemned.

" Read the holy ſcriptures," ſays
cellent preacher *; " you will there
" where ſee idleneſs held up to exec
" and labour expreſsly enjoined to a
" out diſtinction of rank or ſex
" barren tree was to be cut down a
" into the fire; the ſlothful ſervan
" caſt into outer darkneſs; and ſl
" neſs always puniſhed with as muc
" rity as infidelity itſelf."

I will flatter myſelf that all thele
tions will make ſome impreſſion
minds of my young readers; the
ſtill before them the whole field of
gather its fruits we muſt explore i
without ſtopping to repoſe. But t
is only fatiguing to thoſe who l
ſtand trifling by the way.

* The Abbe Poulle—*Sermon on the*
civil Life.

I ſhall conclude with again recommending the two things moſt neceſſary to the right employment of our time—*regularity and perſeverance.*

Who well begins can thence ſmall merit claim:
To finiſh well is all*.

CHAP. IX.

Of Society, and our firſt Entrance into the World.

SINCE we are deſtined to live in ſociety, we ſhould wiſh to conciliate the kindneſs and good-will of all. We cannot arrive at this end without poſſeſſing amiable and of courſe eſtimable qualities.

With politeneſs of manners, equality of temper, gentleneſs, and modeſty, no perſon can fail of ſucceeding well in the world.

Many young people peaſude themſelves they ſhall make their way in the world by practiſing a mean and ſervile complaiſance;

* From the tragedy of Theodore, by Pierre Cornellle.

they

they are miſtaken; littleneſs and adulation are ſoon ſeen through; and people the moſt corrupt deſpiſe them.

I know nothing more deſpicable than to diſſemble our belief in God and our ſentiments of religion, to pleaſe others who are void of principle.

To affect incredulity to avoid inſipid railleries, is to be a fool. To act the free-thinker with views of worldly intereſt, is to be a wretch.

We ſhould neither make a parade of our piety nor hide it.

A man void of conſiſtency and of truth, whatever be his other qualities, his rank, or his advantages, will never obtain the ſmalleſt degree of conſideration in the world.

Thoſe who become flatterers, are, both in appearance and reality, inconſiſtent and falſe; they are inceſſantly changing ſides, and by turns ſupporting arguments for and againſt the ſame opinion: they approve one day what they condemned the preceding; and paſs the greater part of their lives in retracting ſentiments which they

had advanced and in contradicting themselves.

Young people who enter the world with an exceſſive deſire to pleaſe, neceſſarily commit many blunders and abſurdities. They wiſh to play a part in it, and to attract attention; their awkward attempts deprive them of an infinite number of natural graces, and want of cuſtom in their aſſumed characters makes them appear in a very ridiculous light. La Mothe was in the right when he ſaid,

"Too great a wiſh to pleaſe diſpleaſes moſt;

"'Tis too much not to ſtudy it at all: well; ſtudy it but little*."

The beſt diſpoſitions a young man can bring into the world, is a wiſh not to produce any effect in it, but to loſe himſelf in the crowd; to withdraw within himſelf as much as politeneſs will admit, and to ſtudy it long in ſilence.

Simplicity of manners, an expreſſion of gentleneſs, modeſty, and compoſure in youth form a demeanour, an exterior highly prepoſſeſſing.

* *The Graces*, a fable by La Mothe.

The

Thoſe youths who make their way into the world with all the affectation of gaiety, *fire*, vivacity, generally diſpleaſe; they are familiar, impertinent, and intruding; vulgarity and preſumptuous confidence are their leading characteriſtics.

Vivacity and gaiety, are naturally checked in an aſſembly compoſed of our ſuperiors; particularly where we are ſtrangers, and our ignorance of their characters and manners ought to inſpire reſerve. For a young man to bring into ſuch a company that levity of behaviour I have been deſcribing, is either impertinent affectation or obſtinate ſtupidity.

Youth has commonly the misfortune in endeavouring to avoid a fault to run into its oppoſite extreme; this abſurdity is the natural reſult of ignorance and want of reflection. Impertinence manifeſts itſelf in a thouſand different forms, and under every form it is odious and ridiculous.

I have often been ſtruck with a remarkable contraſt which I have obſerved between two great nations (the French and Engliſh): the affectation of young people in France ill educated, is that of boiſterous

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mirth, and of *ardent and paſſionate* ſenſibility; the young people of England, on the contrary, affect to ſhew a contemptuous indifference, an extreme coldneſs, and always to wear an air of negligence and abſence.

The firſt kind of affectation holds forth abſurdities much more ſtriking, but it cannot inſpire averſion. The ſecond furniſhes leſs ſubject for ridicule; but offenſive from its haughtineſs we feel inclined to hate it. Young people have been too often told, that even in their manner of liſtening, they may ſhew intelligence and good ſenſe! I wiſh to give them a caution on this head which perhaps they have never yet heard: it is, that the affectation of *liſtening with an air of wiſdom* produces preciſely the contrary effect.

An artificial play of countenance is aſſumed, of which all the movements are forced; a look is called up, meant for one of approbation, but it is only fawning; this mute flattery ſeldom ſucceeds; people of this character often imagine they perceive wit where none has been diſplayed, they ſmile or laugh in the wrong place, becauſe

becauſe it is almoſt always at little jokes in ſociety to which they have not the key, or at alluſions which they cannot comprehend. In a word, inſtead of evincing ſenſe or delicacy, they have the air and expreſſion of ſimpletons.

How many people would ſpare themſelves from embarraſſment, pain, and ridicule, were they to affect nothing, but leave nature to act. How amiable would they be even with a limited ſhare of intelligence, were they always modeſt, ingenuous, and natural.

It is in France very properly recommended to young people on their firſt entrance into the world, to ſhew reſpect, attention, and an extreme deference to old age, particularly to old ladies. It is they who ſtamp the reputation of *theſe novices*, who are never impartially judged *by their peers*. Old ladies cannot be ſuſpected of partialities of a certain nature; their words, like thoſe of the Sybils, are taken for oracles; they decide with ſovereign authority on the merits of youth, their diſpoſitions and perſonal advantages, on their wit, ſenſe, and politeneſs; they pronounce what

they are, and predict what they ſhall be. They are ſeldom miſtaken, and always meet with implicit credit; their ſuffrage then muſt be of the utmoſt value. Beſides, young people of natural good ſenſe may enjoy much real pleaſure in their ſociety; they may there acquire a knowledge of the world, which they could not ſo quickly attain to elſewhere. An old lady who poſſeſſes benevolence of mind, ſtrength of underſtanding, and who has paſſed her life at court or in the great world, has it in her power to give advice and inſtructions to youth of the moſt uſeful kind, and which they would not find in books. Upon the whole, the converſation of perſons of this deſcription is in general truly intereſting from the amuſing anecdotes and refined obſervations with which it abounds.

As for what is called *gallantry* to women in general, it ſhould be ſhewn only by polite attentions, and in a tone peculiarly reſpectful. A young man appears in a very ungraceful point of view, if he ſpeaks to a woman in as high a tone of voice and with a manner as diſengaged as when he addreſſes one of his own ſex. A peculiar delicacy

delicacy of reſpect is obſerved in ſpeaking to kings and princes: it is a mark of true good taſte and a poliſhed mind to uſe the ſame to women. A perſon of wit told Le Kain, the famous actor, that on the ſtage he alone *knew how to ſpeak to women*; becauſe in effect his tone, his countenance, his addreſs, in a word, his whole ſoul ſeemed then to ſoften; all ſpoke deference and reſpect. But beſides all this, thoſe direct praiſes, thoſe inſipid compliments, all that unmeaning jargon called gallantry in ſome of our worſt novels, has long been out of faſhion; this language offends women of any delicacy, and even coquettes themſelves, ſo greedy of admiration, are only pleaſed with it when they receive it indirectly; they deſpiſe that groſs adulation conveyed in plain terms, as too unpoliſhed, too vulgar for them to be flattered by it.

A wiſh to oblige is without doubt a very amiable quality in ſociety, but it requires diſcernment to know where to ſtop, and not to obtrude our good offices officiouſly and out of time.

Arthur, now fifteen years old, is the beſt boy in the world, always ready to offer

his ſervices, to run, to fly to oblige, but unfortunately he does not take time to reflect, and is as raſh as officious. Is a commiſſion given to another, he ſeizes hold of it without knowing what is to be done or ſaid, and even without aſking to be informed of it; he is called to, begged to deſiſt, but he is already gone. If tea is to be made, he muſt alſo aſſiſt in the making of it; he overthrows the cups, ſpills the boiling water, and ſcalds two or three of the company; he takes upon himſelf wherever he goes the charge of ſtirring the fire and ſnuffing the candles, and ſcarcely ever fails to fill the room full of ſmoke, or to extinguiſh the lights: is the bell to be rung, he flies like an arrow towards it, tumbles over and breaks every thing in his way, and ſeizes hold of the cord with ſuch force and impetuoſity that he ſnaps it aſunder. A lady lets her fan drop, he haſtens to ſtoop for it at the ſame time that ſhe does; ſhe has already got hold of it, but he ſnatches it from her that he may preſent it to her, and in riſing he gives her a great knock on the head, which diſcompoſes her head-dreſs, and raiſes a bump on her forehead.

In

In his rage for obliging, he would be ready to put any one to death who ſhould diſpute his performance of a commiſſion; and it is chiefly the mortal fear he entertains, that he ſhall be deprived of the pleaſure of rendering ſome ſervice, that makes his movements ſo rough and precipitate. It is above all the deſire that he may have the credit of performing a good office, that actuates him, not that it ſhould be performed; that is but a falſe, or at beſt but an imperfect kind of courteſy. Real courteſy is compoſed, deliberate, ſteady; it is never importunate, and always amiable.

Of all manias, that which renders people the moſt weariſome in ſociety is the making themſelves and their affairs a frequent ſubject of converſation; and of all faults the moſt inſupportable (and this alſo proceeds from arrogance) is the wiſh always to appear in the right. A perſon of this character unfortunately too common lays aſide all frankneſs and ſincerity, and neceſſarily practiſes the moſt odious duplicity: does he commit an offence; inſtead of confeſſing it ingenuouſly, he vainly torments himſelf for ſubterfuges to diſguiſe it;

the moſt ſubtle evaſions however only aggravate the wrong, and the offended perſon at laſt becomes juſtly irritated, not at the original offence, which perhaps was only a trifle, but at the obſtinacy with which it was denied, or the falſehoods which were reſorted to in order to conceal it.

Young people who reflect, and who poſſeſs ſuperiour ſenſe and genius, ought to look upon their firſt entrance into active life as a thing of very ſerious importance. Fools only anticipate the pleaſure of viſits, public amuſements, and balls; but thoſe who think rationally will conſider in another point of view that memorable æra, when from the boſom of their families they ſhall be admitted into the claſs of citizens, there to form links of the great ſocial chain. This idea is not formed to fill the imagination with only vain and frivolous objects, it ſhould inſpire the mind with noble and uſeful reflections.

The world ought to be conſidered as an immenſe ſchool, where we ſhall meet an infinite number of *bad ſcholars*, and even of *wrong teachers*; but where are alſo to be found *great maſters* and incorruptible judges, who

who may be deceived becauſe they are men, but who will never diſtribute rewards or crowns of merit to folly or to barefaced vice.

William, my young friend, how have you conducted yourſelf at the univerſity of Oxford? you have attached yourſelf particularly to thoſe profeſſions famed for their virtues and extenſive condition; you have conſulted them, and followed their advice; you have formed connections only with thoſe wiſe ſtudents who are ſteady in their purſuit of knowledge; you ſhun the ſociety of thoſe of a contrary deſcription; you bear away all the prizes of literary fame, and you are held up as a model for young men of your age: very well; when you come forward in the gay world of London, conduct yourſelf in the ſame manner, and you will have the ſame ſucceſs.

Propriety of conduct on our firſt introduction in the world, is ſo much the more important as it has an influence on all our future lives. The firſt impreſſions, whether good or bad, are never eaſily effaced.

On our firſt ſtep, my ſon, in the world's maze
Depends the colour of our future days;
Let ridicule, with pointed finger, ſneer,
Th' impreſſion's fixed—in vain each added year
Corrects thoſe errors which her voice arraigns;
The prejudice deep-rooted ſtill remains:
Suſpicion eyes aſkance the change new-wrought,
And retroſpective cites the long-paſt fault:
Even hoary age oft meets the fettled ſcorn
Of youthful follies, thus unheeded born*.

CHAP. X.

Of Inſipidity.

It does not depend upon ourſelves alone to be witty and ingenious, that is to ſay, to poſſeſs an agreeable and original turn of wit: but with reflection and exertion we may get the better of that tireſome inſipidity which renders a commerce with many people in the world ſo unpleaſantly dull, although in other reſpects they may be perſons of very clear and ſound underſtandings. Inſipidity proceeds in general from one of three cauſes: from a liftleſs

* From the *Indiſcret* of Voltaire.

apathy,

apathy, from the ſilly habit of inceſſantly repeating favorite and common place expreſſions; or laſtly, from a laxity of organization, which makes a perſon mechanically imitate all which they ſee others do. I have remarked that in general, people extremely inſipid have in reality no character; and it is indolence and idleneſs which cauſes this void: they will not take the trouble either to look or to reflect; they ſee with the eyes of others, and think as they do; they let all their faculties ſleep, and arrive at the end of their career without having ever been *themſelves* for a ſingle inſtant of their lives. Men, who of all creatures ſeems the moſt formed to be led, has however ſtill this in his character; if he had no one to guide him, he would learn to go, and make his way by himſelf.

Young people ought certainly to be diffident of their own judgments in eſſential points; they ſhould conſult and pay deference to the advice of their ſuperiors in wiſdom: it is not becoming in them to decide in an authoritative tone on any ſubject; but in an infinite number of little things of a frivolous and arbitrary nature, they

they ought to accuſtom themſelves to judge from their own taſte; and above all never to praiſe and expreſs diſapprobation but when they are charmed or diſpleaſed, and not on the word of others.

Ceſarina is the moſt inſipid young perſon of my acquaintance; as ſhe never conſults either her underſtanding or her heart, ſhe has nothing more than a factious or borrowed exiſtence. She is not an animated creature; ſhe is merely a phantom, a ſhadow, a nothing. She has none of thoſe primary emotions which ſpring from the ſoul; ſhe muſt conſult others to know what ſhe ought to think; ſhe feels only by rebound. Relate to her a trait of the moſt ſublime virtue, ſhe looks around her, and never pronounces an opinion till ſhe has found out that of the reſt of the company; does ſhe hear a ſally of the moſt riſible and comic nature, ſhe never even ſmiles before ſhe has heard ſome other perſon laugh. Her ſenſibility and her gaiety are a depoſit in the hands of thoſe who ſurround her, they may diſpoſe of them as they will.

She

She has *ready-made judgments* to produce on particular occaſions; ſhe will tell you that the tragedies of Racine are *very affecting*, *very intereſting*; that thoſe of Corneille are *very fine*. Aſk her no further, ſhe has very little memory; and this is all ſhe has been able to learn by heart; ſhe cannot retain particulars; when ſhe is a little older ſhe will have acquired a few more common-place ſentences on the ſame ſubject, which ſhe will repeat with the ſame fidelity.

Ceſarina follows the faſhions with the moſt ſcrupulous exactneſs, not from coquetry; but moſt ladies had left off under petticoats, therefore *under petticoats were ſuperfluous*. Were they to lay aſide even the light draperies which they ſtill wear, Ceſarina, though naturally modeſt, would not heſitate to do the ſame. Muſt we not do as others do? this perſuaſion might carry people of this imitative turn very far. A very painful and embarraſſing circumſtance for Ceſarina is, if ſhe is at any time, by chance, forced to make a choice for herſelf, even in things of the moſt trivial nature, for inſtance, to fix on muſlin for

for a robe, she implores in vain for advice, and not having succeeded in obtaining it she cannot decide. Choose for yourself, is repeated to her; take the handsomest, that most to your taste. *The handsomest!* that is so vague! and *what pleases me most!* what can I do? Cesarina has not a single taste of her own; she unfolds and tumbles over every piece; do you suppose she is examining them? not at all; she is endeavouring to read in the countenances of others what they like best; she would extort that important advice which they refuse to give her. Her cousin Sophia, who is allowed to have a very good taste, has her eyes fixed on a particular piece, Cesarina is instantly decided, and the robe is bought.

Is a party made to go to the reading of a work already highly praised, Cesarina, as others do, draws her chair as close as she can to the reader, and it is curious to observe her applauses; like a machine she seems to be moved by some secret spring in the hands of the person whom she looks up to as her oracle. If the work is of the pathetic kind, she draws out her handker-

chief

chief as ſhe ſees others do, but it is to wipe eyes "*unconſcious of a tear.*" She repeats from time to time in a low voice, *that is charming, how enchanting*, &c. at the ſame time endeavouring to conceal a number of ſtifled yawns.

The general converſation of Ceſarina is very obliging, for it is all approbation. *I think juſt ſo; and I too; it is very true; that is quite juſt:* this is pretty nearly what may be collected of her *no meanings.* However, ſhe occaſionally mingles with theſe ſentences ſome remarks on the temperature of the air, on the cold, the heat, the rain, &c. You may ſee her every day of the year, and you will never hear her utter a ſyllable more intereſting.

Should Ceſarina at ſome future happy period form the reſolution of entering into herſelf, and of thinking, ſhe would be much aſtoniſhed to diſcover that unconſciouſly ſhe had, till that moment, been guilty of an uninterrupted ſeries of falſehood; that ſhe has not yet begun to live, and that nevertheleſs ſhe poſſeſſes all the requiſites to enable her to feel, to compare, and to judge. She would be ſenſible that

thus

thus alienating her intellectual faculties is a folly more ſtrange than that of a man who, from lazineſs and to ſpare himſelf the trouble of walking, ſhould for ever condemn himſelf to lead the life of a cripple in a bowl. The pleaſures of the mind are the moſt exquiſite, the moſt varied, and the ſweeteſt of all pleaſures; and the enjoyments which have their ſource in the ſoul, thoſe alone which are pure and delicious. In a word, Ceſarina would learn that it is degrading the dignity of human nature, to devote it to this ſhameful ſtate of vegetation, and that an automaton, which even well-guided is but a tireſome and inſipid object, would become contemptible, and even miſchievous, if chance had thrown it into vicious hands.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of false Judgments, of Calumny, and of a literary Career.

SCRIPTURE tells us, "*Judge not, that ye "be not judged.*"

Supreme Wisdom has found this precept so important, that a promise has been annexed to it, which should the more engage us to an observance of it; and notwithstanding we judge continually on the deceitful word of the wicked, we are incessantly the echo of calumny, and our own judgments are full of partiality; we criticise in those we do not love, what appears to us a grace or a virtue in our friends; we are unjust and cruel, often from gaiety of heart, without passion and without interest. Such are the generality of mankind with whom we mix in society; the greatest misfortune is not that of becoming their victim, but of resembling them.

Young people should accustom themselves to feel how very beautiful it is, how great

great it is, to be invariably juſt and equitable, and they ſhould alſo know that this precious virtue cannot be poſſeſſed whilſt we are inconſiderate or light, or whilſt we allow ourſelves to be ruled by an ill underſtood ſelf-love; I ſay *ill underſtood*, for an enlightened ſelf-love would place glory in being equitable, becauſe true glory can alone be found in the practice of virtue.

Youth burns with the deſire of being remarkable, of diſtinguiſhing itſelf; and it is continually, through choice, thrown into the moſt deſpicable and vulgar throng; it enters the moſt beaten paths, and theſe are never the moſt honourable and ſure. There are a number of elegant phaetons, beautiful horſes, magnificent habits, ſuperb houſes, ſo that the poſſeſſion of all theſe cannot excite the ſurpriſe of ſpectators: but unite to youth ſolid principles, talents, a virtuous and wiſe conduct; ah! be then ſure that you will be remarkable and diſtinguiſhed in a manner which can alone be flattering.

There is no man of letters meriting this title, who has not from his youth, and often from his infancy, ſhewn a diſpoſition and a taſte

taſte for literature; thus amongſt my readers of fourteen and fifteen years old, there will ſurely be found a great many who purpoſe to conſecrate themſelves, one day, to the ſtudy of the *belles lettres*.

It is to them I addreſs this chapter. It is to you above all, young and dear Helmine, who have teſtified ſo much confidence in me; it is to you I am going to ſpeak. But what is my intention! How! ſhall I diſturb the peace and ſerenity of that pure and innocent ſoul, by tearing aſide the deluſive veil which hides the future; I am going to teach you that you are to expect injuſtice, cruelty, hatred, and calumny!——However, it is too neceſſary to know this ſorrowful truth!

Helmine, you will have great talents; the education you receive, and your firſt eſſays promiſe as much*.

You will be celebrated notwithſtanding your ſincere project of remaining unknown,

* Helmine is bred up by a mother as enlightened as ſhe is tender. Genius and talents are the hereditary gifts in his family; the grandmother of Helmine has left a very celebrated collection of poetry in Germany.

you will be celebrated; fortify your soul then, prepare it to sustain you with courage against all the envenomed shafts of injustice and calumny; be armed before hand, and you will neither be surprised nor discouraged by them. They will begin by disputing your verses; they will maintain that they are not yours; afterwards they will criticise them without either reason or equity; and when, notwithstanding all these vain efforts, your literary reputation shall be perfectly established, libels will succeed satires, and your person be calumniated.

Have they not said that Ségrais, who never published without his name any work of wit and sentiment, had the generosity to give his *Princess of Cleves* to Madame de la Fayette? have they not said, during ten years, that a monk lent his pen to the immortal Buffon? and that a Chartreux composed the beautiful tragedies of Crébillon? &c. &c.

And as for other odious pieces of injustice, they are still more inevitable. Fénelon was persecuted, and for having written Telemachus! that sublime work caused him to be accused of ingratitude and wickedness!

wickedness! nothing was seen in that perfect moral but malicious illusions; in the paintings, so well traced and so useful, nothing but satirical portraits. His works were torn and burlesqued, his manners attacked! The great Corneille, that incomparable genius and creator of the theatre, was he sheltered from the most unjust censure? a body of which he was the principal glory, had the baseness, in order to please those who envied him, to criticise absurdly one of his finest works, and masterpiece afterwards!

Racine saw *Pradon* preferred, and *Athalia* condemned, which was not brought up again until after his death.

What bitter railing has not the excellent, the inimitable work of *La Bruyère* produced?

If we read the most moderate criticism, that of *Vigneul Marville*, which is placed in several additions at the end of the Characters, we shall there perceive the most revolting insincerity, the blackest calumny, attacking with fury and turning into ridicule by turns the author of the book, in the end declaring that this work has only been read because it is *a libel*.

J. B. Rousseau,

J. B. Rouſſeau, the greateſt of our poets and victim of a horrible calumny, (ſo well known to be ſuch after his death,) was obliged to fly, to emigrate, and finiſhed his unfortunate days in a ſtrange country. He had much occaſion to exclaim:

But 'twill be ſaid, in this untoward age,
Is there no ſpotleſs virtue, no rare talent
That envy will not wound? Yes, pardon me,
One merit ſtill exiſts, at which her ſhafts
Are never pointed; he may ſleep ſecure
Free from her malice who poſſeſſes it!
What is it then? 'tis Mediocrity--- * *
* * * * * * *
Let all your actions hold the middle courſe,
Nor riſe ſuperior to the common herd;
So ſhall the world find courage to commend you;
So ſhall its malice reſt from all offence;
But if you ſoar to eminence ſublime,
Prepare to meet its keeneſt, deadlieſt hate;
Each heart ſhall envy then, each tongue aſſail you*.

A work might be made as voluminous as intereſting upon the melancholy ſubject of *perſecuted genius and talents.*

We can only free ourſelves from this misfortune by cabals and intrigue, which muſt be ſupported by an affluent fortune.

* Epiſtles by J. B. Rouſſeau.

It

It was thus Voltaire became deified during his life; he flattered and encouraged, he augmented the licentiousness and corruption of his age, a certain means of gaining the greatest number of partisans; he was prodigal of flattery and adulation to kings, to princes, and to the great; he lied, he purchased suffrages; he praised, without measure, his admirers and creatures; he tore the characters, and calumniated people of worth, and all men who united soundness of morals to talents; in fine, he made himself the chief of a party, and what a party!——

What then was the result of this baseness and art, as fatiguing as it was odious and criminal, and which lasted sixty years? Voltaire terminated all by destroying morals; he was, during his life, the idol of atheists and libertines; actors crowned his bust on the stage; courtiers conducted his funeral obsequies, but by the virtuous he was contemned, and his memory dishonored. It would be even better to suffer injustice, and to suffer to the tomb, rather than escape from it by such means.

Thus then, whoever holds the project of conſecrating their ſtudies and their life to letters. ſhould examine themſelves well before-hand. If they ſhould be weak and timid characters, eaſily diſcouraged, let them beware of entering that dangerous career, where they would be the moſt unfortunate of all beings: ever deceived, always irritated, often unſteady in their principles, ſacrificing morality and truth to the deſire of pleaſing and the hope of ſucceſs; profaning and even degrading their talents in the vain ſearch after the reputation of a day; loſing that renown and true glory which belongs only to thoſe authors who, conducted by the ſole intereſts of virtue, do not contradict or belie themſelves; but in all times and all places directing themſelves towards the ſame end, and diſplay the ſame principles and the ſame ſentiments.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Of fraternal Friendſhip.

LOVE only exiſts in the imagination; what invincibly proves this is, as I have elſewhere ſaid*, that mankind neareſt approaching to the ſtate of nature, ſavages, and country people, know not what we call the *great paſſion*. Whilſt on the contrary, it is at court, in capital cities, as alſo upon our theatres, that love plays ſo great a part. La Rochefoucault ingeniouſly ſays with much truth, "*there are people* "*who would never have been in love, if* "*they had not heard it ſpoken of.*" In effect, the very falſe idea, that it is neceſſary to experience *one paſſion* in our lives, is enough to prove the illuſion.

All ſentiments which we cannot preſerve during life, do not proceed from the ſoul.

Sentiments produced only by the heat of imagination, are as dangerous as frail; virtue ſhould fear, and wiſdom preſerve us from them.

* In Adelaide and Theodore.

Friendſhip is a noble and real ſentiment; the ſource of it is pure, and ſprings from the heart.

The ancients, ſo ingenious in their emblems, gave as a device for friendſhip theſe words: "*far and near, ſummer and winter**;" meaning to expreſs, that being of all ſeaſons its charms equally the radiant days of youth and the laſt moments of life.

Without doubt the true friends of young perſons of both ſexes, the moſt neceſſary, the moſt tender they can have, are the authors of their days.——However it is ſtill natural they ſhould deſire a friend of their own age, a companion who may, though unable to guide them in the career of life, at leaſt follow them to its concluſion!

But how difficult is it to make ſuch a choice, and how ſad to be deceived in making one! Young and without expe-

* The ancients did not repreſent it as we do, by a youth in the character of ſpring: they deſigned it by the repreſentation of ſummer, which produces the firſt *fruits*: an idea much more juſt, becauſe it appears that as the ſpring produces only flowers, *it* ſhould only repreſent the age of adoleſcence.

rience

rience, your wish for a young friend! how or where can you find such? the friend you seek has not yet attained a reputation; who can answer for his character? the virtues of his parents? and can you be certain he inherits them? are you acquainted with the particulars of his education, and whether he may have profited by it? In supposing his education good, and his principles the same, are you certain he may have firmness enough to preserve them always? Do you know his heart, his character, his tastes, and his natural defects?

You would then at hazard choose an alliance; you would choose a friend, as you would a lottery ticket! but if you should be abused and deceived by agreeable appearances, and place your confidence in a weak and despicable object, what chagrin are you preparing for yourself, and what dangers are you exposed to!——But if you should have a brother, ah! could you seek a better friend; an alliance so sweet, so sacred, does it not assure you of this?

Such is the friend you desire; nature gives him to you; know then how to ap-

preciate the bleſſing.—Bred up together, the ſame education, the ſame principles, the ſame intereſts, the ſame affections unite you; what other friend could you know ſo thoroughly? what other friend would partake like a brother your happineſs, your griefs, your taſte, and all your ſentiments? He muſt with you reſpect the objects of your veneration; he muſt think and act as you do; his exterior even is conformable to yours: if you are in affliction, he is not permitted to give himſelf up to diſſipation! if you are obliged to wear the ſorrowful garb of mourning, he muſt alſo do the ſame; your names are alike; your birth and common anceſtors eſtabliſh between you the moſt perfect equality; he cannot ſignalize his days without honouring yours; all in his character retraces and deſcribes a ſecond ſelf, every feature, even the ſound of his voice!——Oh! what friendſhip can have the ſame charms, perfection, or be ſo ſecure as that of fraternal friendſhip? It is an abſurdity to boaſt ſo much of friendſhips formed at colleges and ſchools; and yet that fraternal friendſhip ſhould be regarded ſo lightly. We pique

ourſelves

ourſelves on the ſtrictneſs of our fidelity towards the companions of our infancy, and we feel no ſuch ſentiments towards our brothers and ſiſters.

I know nothing more inconſiſtent or unnatural; and it is not the pretence of a particular ſympathy which makes the unjuſt preference; the conformity of mind and character has nothing to do in the caſe; do not we each day hear repeated, *I am attached to ſuch a one, becauſe our connection is dated ſince our infancy?* This reaſon alone ſeems ſufficient.

I have long remarked, that in general all theſe pretended friendſhips are nothing more than frivolous connexions, founded ſolely on little ſcores of vanity.

Florina was educated at * Panthemont; ſhe had there two moſt intimate friends, Argentina and Alicia; the firſt was infinitely more amiable than the ſecond. Florina alſo, in her heart, gave the preference to Argentina; ſhe poſſeſſed both wit

* A celebrated Abbey in Paris, in which nearly all the young perſons of the court were educated.

and good ſenſe, and made choice of a huſband worthy of herſelf; ſhe married a man of merit, who formed the happineſs of her life; but his name was obſcure and his fortune but middling. Alicia, who conſidered nothing elſe in marriage but the pleaſure of having the fineſt liveries and a place at court, married the ſon of a great nobleman, who procured theſe two advantages for her.——As ſoon as Florina in her turn was married, and entered the world, ſhe re-encountered her two former companions; ſhe ſought, and cultivated with the greateſt attention Alicia, become the daughter-in-law of a mareſchal of France; the eſtimable Argentina was neglected, and very ſoon entirely forgotten.

Obſerve in the great world all connections of this ſort, and you will find that nearly all ſuch are formed from ſimilar motives.

Ungrateful towards Providence, ſhall we be ever unthankful, ever deſpiſe the real bleſſings ſo laviſhly beſtowed on us, in order to ſearch for thoſe which are chimerical!——We give to a ſtrange friend the

the tender name of *ſiſter*, we wiſh that this moving title ſhould be the aſſurance and teſtimony of the greateſt affection; and we really have an amiable ſiſter who poſſeſſes ſenſibility, and who we do not love at all!

Whoever refuſes a fraternal friendſhip, can they be capable of experiencing any other? a bad brother, that is to ſay, an indifferent one, can he make an excellent friend? no, undoubtedly: whoever loves not thoſe whom he naturally ſhould, poſſeſſes only a falſe ſenſibility, and will never be worthy of inſpiring a true and ſolid attachment.

CHAP. XIII.

Of an elevated Rank, and of Princes.

SOSTHENES at ſixteen years of age diſcovers a great deal of wit, with the fineſt ſoul. Son to a nobleman of high rank the favorite of a ſovereign, and himſelf already

poſſeſſing the friendſhip of a young prince the heir to a throne, he conducts himſelf at preſent according to thoſe principles which have actuated the few virtuous men who have done honor to courts and humanity.

He knows that the diſgrace of thoſe who have abuſed their power is inevitable and terrible, becauſe ever accompanied by ignominy; whilſt on the contrary, for the faithful and virtuous friends of kings there can be *no fall*; caprice and ingratitude may deſpoil them, but cannot degrade them; they may quit their places without deſcending; titles and honors may be taken from them, but they are in poſſeſſion of the right which ſhould obtain them; they are bereaved of all ornaments, the marks which in general announce merit, but they ſtill poſſeſs virtue itſelf. The people diſpenſe towards them the teſtimonies of reſpect due to their ſituations; and the whole nation agrees in rendering them a voluntary and unanimous homage; they have loſt only illuſions, and they enjoy the moſt pleaſing reality of glory.

Softhenes

Softhenes uſes every effort to inſpire the young prince with the love of literature; when the prince conſults him, Softhenes replies, Ah! conſult thoſe more able than I to inſtruct you; conſult the true counſellors of princes; read good books; but read alone, and with profound attention.

Softhenes has already among young people many who are envious of him, and who are his enemies; but he preſcribes to himſelf a law of never ſpeaking to the prince of thoſe he does not like; at leaſt till he has procured the lateſt evidence of their dangerous malice, and then he informs the prince, not in ſecret but publickly, by producing proofs which are not impeachable; and even in this caſe he ſtill exhorts the prince never to condemn the accuſed perſons without hearing their defence, becauſe this principle of equity, above all on the part of princes, cannot permit of any exception.

Softhenes, whoſe reaſon is ſo premature, has already read Fenelon, Maſſillon, and La Bruyere; he has extracted from theſe authors their fineſt thoughts on princes and the

the great world; he has set down these extracts in small writing in a little pocket volume; and has presented the young prince with the sublime collection; thus supplying him with the power of having them always about him, and of reading them over often.

Among the precious collection may be found the following thought from La Bruyere:

"*They say so much ill of this man, and I perceive so little in him, that I begin to suspect he possesses a merit superior to those who calumniate him.*"

Sostheres has the two most essential qualities for persons of an elevated rank, integrity and firmness: but we can never perceive the least degree of obstinacy in him; this vice, far from proving the existence of a character, clearly demonstrates the want of it.

Conceitedness and self-sufficiency proceed from weakness, idleness, and pride. People will not take the trouble of enlightening themselves on different subjects, and they blush to confess that they may be mistaken.

miſtaken. It requires much ſtrength of mind and probity to frankly acknowledge our faults and our errors.

In fine, Soſthenes defends himſelf againſt all praiſe, and from all flattering, inconſiderate, ſlandering perſons. He believes no ill without a poſitive proof, never from ſecret reports and petty informations, and leſs again from libels; he quickly ſuſpects envy and calumny; when he hears people of diſtinguiſhed talents torn to pieces, he calls to mind the thought of La Bruyere which I have juſt recited.

May the young prince who is educated with Soſthenes, ever preſerve ſuch a friend!

Princes grow weary and tire ſooner than other men, becauſe they are in general ill educated, and poſſeſs fewer reſources within themſelves. All pleaſures vaniſh quickly except theſe of the mind, which ignorant people are unacquainted with.

Princes have more means than the generality of men to gratify all their frivolous taſtes; for which reaſon they are impaired at an early age; at five-and-twenty they have no longer the vivacity which accompanies

panies youth; they have only that futility which belongs to old age, and which their flatterers set forth as a graceful levity; but this pretended grace deprives them of all consequence, and makes them to be despised by the public who expect solidity in persons of an elevated rank. In effect this levity is too frightful in its consequences to be pleasing. And princes have such an influence over the public welfare, that each member has a powerful interest in desiring they should possess every virtue.

It would be infinitely better were a prince to be even a pedant than a trifler.

Pedantry supposes always some knowledge, or at least a pretension to it; it is not only excusable in princes, but approaches nearly to a merit, so much is it liked in them not to discover extreme ignorance; and even to blush for it, and wish to hide it.

A king, who is really fond of study and literature, cannot be a bad king. He who has an aversion to such things cannot make a good one.

Hunting

Hunting ſhould not employ more of a ſovereign's time than is neceſſary for exerciſe. *An Emperor who paſſes his days in the chaſe loſes his reign:* this is a Chineſe proverb, which it would be well to recite to the children of princes.

In monarchies flattery corrupts the king, that is to ſay, one man only. In republics, it corrupts the people, and conſequently public morals.

Etiquette is the ſureſt ſafeguard of the reputation of princeſſes.

A young princeſs, who frees herſelf from the fatigues of etiquette, expoſes herſelf to the misfortune of being calumniated, whatever may be the innocence of her life. Reſpect makes a conſiderable part of the love which good princes inſpire; they are not loved really, nor with enthuſiaſm, whilſt they are not revered. Therefore, all which can diminiſh the reſpect due to them, alters and impairs the ſentiments they ſhould inſpire.

Pride and haughtineſs are always hateful, but dignity may be very well allied with goodneſs; and in princes it enhances the value of their affability.

Superſtition

Superſtition degrades princes; ſincere piety is the only real teſt of the ſteadineſs of their virtue.

People require that princes ſhould be religious; they are in the right: a nation governed by impious men cannot be long happy and flouriſhing.

CHAP. XIV.

Of free Thinkers.

I HAVE already ſaid much on this ſubject in all my works, more eſpecially in that intitled *Religion conſidered as the only foundation of happineſs and true philoſophy.* Therefore not to repeat my own words here, I ſhall limit myſelf to a few reflections, which appear to me pretty new.

What do we mean by this expreſſion of *free thinkers?*, an impious perſon, that is to ſay, one who has no belief in religion, who is either an atheiſt or a deiſt; two things nearly

nearly synonimous as to belief, and absolutely resembling in the result. The atheist denies the existence of God; the deist has a language less odious and less extravagant; he admits the existence of God, but he maintains that God neither desires worship nor prayer; and that he does not interfere with things below. Therefore God with deists is as if he were not: thus to admit of God, or to deny him, is absolutely the same thing.

The epithet of *free thinker* is a title these have allotted to themselves, because they pretend it is a great *strength of mind* to free themselves from the yoke of religion. But this pretension is absurd. Never should extreme imprudence nor foolish temerity be qualified by the appellation of *strength of mind*, and certainly the most impious person cannot deny that it is infinitely more prudent and sure to follow the dictates of religion than to reject them. They even acknowledge it to be consoling and admirable as to its moral tendency; thus then they unite a crime to imprudence; for it is a crime to wish to deprive mankind

kind of the sweetest consolation, the most sublime hopes, and of veneration for the most perfect code of morality. In this idea and these intensions, there is neither liberality, nor *strength of mind*, nor reason, nor humanity; there is nothing else but an extravagance worthy only of the most profound contempt; but to demonstrate the impropriety of the expression of *free thinker*, the following reasoning will be quite sufficient.

If there be no risk in rejecting religion, it cannot require a *strength of mind* to get free from its yoke. If there should be any risk, it is the greatest and the most incomprehensible of all follies to reject it, because we are then disturbed with the prospect of an unhappy eternity.

Besides, as we have before said, we cannot give the appellation of *strength of mind* to the most absurd extravagance.

Truth may be obscured, but cannot be annihilated.

Notwithstanding the efforts of an audacious and powerful sect, notwithstanding the innumerable writings which have overspread Europe for these sixty years, in order

order to calumniate religion and its votaries, they have not been able to turn into ridicule the epithet of *pious*, nor have they had the power of ennobling that of *impious*: theſe words have ſtill kept their immutable acceptatitons. The atheiſts themſelves look upon it as an injury to bear the odious title of *impious*.

Diderot, who in the Encyclopedia had no other aim but that of deſtroying religion and combating all ideas of Providence, the immortality of the ſoul, and the exiſtence of God; Diderot, ſo licentious, ſo profoundly immoral and impious; Diderot, in fine, author of that infamous book intitled, *James the Fataliſt*; even Diderot would not allow himſelf the title of *impious*. "*An impious perſon*," he ſays, "*is one who reviles a God whom he adores* "*in his heart*; *therefore, an unbeliever and* "*an impious perſon ſhould not be confounded* "*together**,"

Nothing moſt aſſuredly can equal the abſurdity of this definition of the word

* See in the Encyclopedia he word *Impious*.

impious;

impious; for it cannot be denied, that he who aſſaſſinates is an *aſſaſſin*; that he who commits a robbery is a *robber*; and that he who is guilty of impieties is *impious*; but it is the manner in which modern philoſophers reaſon.

Notwithſtanding all their ſarcaſms, all their cabals, all their untruths, neither they nor any perſon elſe can, nor ever will, be able to give as an honourable title to any great man, to any hero, the ſurname of *impious*; but the title of *pious* muſt be ever glorious and affecting; it will ever awaken in all minds the ideas of juſtice, goodneſs, virtue. Moreover, this title choſen by impious perſons, this title invented by themſelves in order to ennoble impiety, this title of *free thinker* is become ſo univerſally ridiculous, that it is no longer uſed but in deriſion; it is nothing but an epigram, nothing but a mockery which they themſelves look upon as inſulting.

It is thus that all pompous ſurnames which are uſurped end by becoming nicknames and offenſive; it is thus that the

great

great surname of philosopher* is degraded every day,, because the present impious race have adopted it, and substituted it in the place of *free thinker*.

True *strength of mind* and of character consists in knowing how to resist the torrent, and in being able, in the midst of a depraved multitude, to preserve our principles and our morals. *Real free thinkers* at this day are religious people. Light and weak minds are easily drawn off by example and by the passions, which are all favoured by impiety.

Examine well all unbelievers, you will find without exception, that they possess no true knowledge of religion; that they have abandoned it without having ever studied it; that they combat its principles without understanding them; and that they judge of it solely by the weakest and most pitiful sophisms, by the superficial writings and untruths of its detractors. You will observe that the real cause for abandoning religion, is the severity of its

* Which signifies a *lover of wisdom*

morals

morals, and the convenience of the principles of the modern philoſophy.

Examine thoroughly the life and conduct of unbelievers, you may perceive in them ſome natural virtues; but if they have ſtrong paſſions you will never find them moral; and in the beſt among them, you will always diſcover a morality that has no ſteady foundation, full of inconcluſive contrarieties and arbitrary principles, varying inceſſantly according to time, place and circumſtances.

Voltaire, Diderot, d'Alembert, and their partiſans, have worked without ceſſation during ſixty years for the purpoſe of eſtabliſhing deiſm; and irreligion has in the time made an inconceivable progreſs. Are men more happy? are they better? ——Let us judge of the doctrine by its effects. What were the unbridled profligates who, towards the end of this age, aroſe to aſtoniſh the univerſe by the atrocity of their crimers and their cruelty? what was Robeſpierre and his accomplices? *a free thinker and deiſts*; enthuſiaſtic diſciples of Voltaire and Diderot, partiſans impaſſioned

impassioned by the influence of their writings, their principles, their doctrine; consequently, declared enemies to the christian religion.

What were those men whose morals and writings have been so decried by these modern philosophers, and whom they have set forth as possessing weak minds? men as virtuous, as irreproachable in their conduct, as surprising for their genius, their parts, and science: Newton, Addison, Pascal, Bossuet, Fénelon, Massillon, Pierre, Corneille, Racine, &c. Illustrious names, revered by the truly virtuous part of mankind, who might enjoy every happiness which can be tasted on earth, if they would follow all the precepts these great men have traced for us in their immortal works; works which, stable as the truths that form their foundations, remain transcendant and full of lights in the midst of the ruins of literature, profaned and degraded by the sophisms of impiety, by the audacity of the licentious, and by the ridicule of people of bad taste.

The

The Encyclopedia, a work at the same time so dangerous, so superficial, and so voluminous; that monstrous collection of sad errors, that brazen colossus on a sandy bottom; the *Encyclopedia* is already sunk in the mud; this work is no longer sold in France; it has started up in England, but is every where despised, while the superb additions of good authors, of religious authors, are multiplying throughout all the countries of Europe. Oh! young people, whose minds may not already be ruined, whose souls remain still upright and pure, two paths are open to you, one is that which leads to *vice* and *error*; the other, that which leads to *truth* and *virtue*: read, compare, reflect, and in succession make your choice*.

* It may perhaps be said, that this chapter, with the following, are rather more adapted for people of an advanced age than for that of adolescence; but I believe they are clear enough for a child of twelve years old to comprehend, should he be well educated. Moreover, I have conceived that this work, which is not intended for very young children, may be read with some advantage

CHAP. XV.

On different Subjects and various Cuſtoms.

Misfortune fortifies the ſoul, as a fatiguing exerciſe fortifies the body.

THERE is but one misfortune which exceeds all thoſe it may be poſſible for us to repreſent to ourſelves, if we can bear to reſt our imagination on ſuch a thought—that of loſing the objects of our affection; in this caſe, religion alone can procure us courage.

We poſſeſs infinitely more moral courage than we are aware of in the ordinary courſe of a peaceful career: it is neceſſary

advantage by thoſe young people recently entered on the ſtage of the world. In fine, let us remember, that Fenelon compoſed his beautiful dialogues of the dead and Telemachus, for a child of nine years old; it is true this child was his pupil, and muſt have poſſeſſed an underſtanding ſuperior to his age.

we ſhould experience many reverſes of fortune to become acquainted with all our ſtrength.

When experience fails us, our imagination is deceitful in all which it repreſents to us; he who has always ſtruggled with adverſity, cannot imagine that the man conſtantly favoured by fortune, and who enjoys the moſt perfect health, can have an idea of grief; however this happy man is well acquainted with chagrin and tears, and often afflicts himſelf beyond meaſure; a ſlight cauſe for uneaſineſs torments him to an exceſs; a ſimple contrariety appears to him an extreme puniſhment; a head-ach is to him an inſupportable evil; his pains, it is true, proceed from an exceſſive delicacy, but his ſufferings are real; a ſlight indiſpoſition, which would be nothing for a robuſt perſon to bear, might deſtroy one of a weak conſtitution: in a like manner, there are no ſlight evils for the favorites of fortune. Theſe on their part repreſent to themſelves the ſituation of the unfortunate in the moſt exaggerated point of view; they cannot conceive how it can be poſſible

to

support without despair, exile, persecutions, calumnies, the loss of riches, and the comforts of this life, &c. they are ignorant of the many lively enjoyments which are experienced even in these various situations; such as, escaping from imminent danger; that still, more sweet and pure, of owing to our misfortunes the friendship with which we interest a feeling soul; that of putting to the test the attachment and fidelity of our friends who may remain such to us: even in the obscurity of a prison there are moments of happiness; a letter received by stealth, a secret hidden from the gaolers, and innumerable other little circumstances which may carry with them consolation and joy.

We must forgive the unfortunate all their moments of envy and bitterness against those who are happy, because they imagine this happiness to be infinitely greater than it really is; but we cannot excuse those whom fortune has treated with lenity, if they do not regard the unfortunate with the most tender and active pity: because they

are only acquainted with the evils they endure, it is impoſſible they ſhould have an idea of their conſolations.

If the unfortunate in general are not as completely to be pitied as it is commonly ſuppoſed they are, it is owing to this that misfortune draws forth nearly from all men the moſt ſublime virtues — phyſical and moral courage, moderation, and wiſdom. I know there are thoſe whom misfortune does not correct, as there are alſo thoſe whom age has not rendered more rational; but we ſhould in general reſpect the unfortunate as we do old age, becauſe it is a ſtate of privations and of ſufferings, and becauſe we ſhould ſuppoſe that this ſtate has given cauſe for thoſe reflections and that experience which ſhould augment the lights of reaſon, and bring virtue to perfection.

It is ſeeing humanity in a very good light, if we hope to preſerve all our friends in adverſity; if we look forward to loſing them all, we regard it through a very black medium; and if we expect that all who

remain

remain our friends ſhall, without any difference, be to us the ſame they were when we could be uſeful to them, it is being ſtill in an error.

How rare, how precious, are thoſe who regard us with equal ſteadineſs in our misfortunes!

As ſoon as we become unfortunate, whatever may be our perſonal merit, we loſe always ſome of our conſequence, even in the eyes of our moſt faithful friends.

When we go to viſit our friend in a garret, or enter his chamber without being firſt announced, we do not appear before him with the ſame countenance, or uſe the ſame tones we did formerly, when he was environed by all the pomps and all the ſuperfluities of luxury, familiarity takes place of politeneſs, we fail in a thouſand little reſpects, which might appear even ridiculous in ſuch a ſituation.

The unfortunate feel all this; for nothing renders people ſo obſerving or ſo teſty as misfortune.

Without being conſcious of it in ourſelves, we almoſt always find that a perſon

fallen from a brilliant situation in life, has less wit than we had allotted to his share while in prosperity. We are less inclined to be of his opinions; however little merited his misfortunes may be, it appears that it always attaches some stain which deprives the unfortunate person of part of the esteem we had conceived for his sense or his character.

We are naturally so vain, that in the most dreadful reverse of fortune, our self-love finds a sort of consolation in the idea that our destiny has something in it extraordinary and surprising: a heart the most undeceived by illusions respecting mankind, is not absolutely insensible to the pleasure of being able to fix the attention of others.

It is sweet, when our griefs are light, to confide them in the bosom of a friend; but when they are excessive, the detail is too painful and impossible. It is this undoubtedly which has given rise to the saying, *that extreme grief is mute.*

O ye who enter the severe school of adversity, would ye acquire courage? Begin by

by entirely suppressing all murmurings and complaints. The dignity of an unfortunate man is in his silence; your griefs by this means will affect infinitely more, truly noble and feeling hearts; and what signifies the degrading pity of others?

In the first moments of an extreme grief, there is a sort of stupid astonishment which accompanies and moderates its violence. It is in vain that we are convinced of our misfortune; it appears to us almost inconceivable; we can with difficulty believe it, or to express it more fully, we are deprived of the faculty of considering it or comprehending its cause.

This kind of sudden shock resembles insensibility; and in effect it suspends each emotion of the soul; no tears, no sighs escape, and we have but very few ideas—*Can it be so?* . . . . *Is it possible?* . . . . these are the only words which we can offer.

In a reverse of fortune, which deprives us only of riches and affluence, there are more enjoyments than privations for a

reaſonable character and an obſerving mind. It is then a mere nothing; and do we not acquire the certainty of being able to do every thing for ourſelves, of having no occaſion for domeſtics, and a thouſand other ſuperfluities which bad habits rendered neceſſary?

Is it not a happineſs to be forced to ſobriety, and to owe our health to an indiſpenſable economy? Health! which we would have purchaſed at any rate when rich, and which can never be enjoyed with an excellent cook and a great table.

When we have not experienced it, we imagine it moſt dreadful to loſe all at once our name, the advantages of birth and fortune; but it is not ſo: in this ſituation we regret our country, we ſhed tears for the dangers, the abſence of thoſe we regard; all the reſt are not only not bitter, but ſerve to occupy, amuſe, and diſſipate our real pains.

The dinners at the public table of an inn are infinitely more amuſing than the great dinners at Paris in what was termed *good company*. An aſſembly without ceremony

mony and without etiquette, compoſed of people of all nations, is an entertaining ſpectacle, which furniſhes matter for many obſervations, and intereſting reflections and inſtructions.

They cannot be ranked with the unfortunate who are obliged to give up a well-known name: does there exiſt this day a being, above all a rational being, who has not learned to prefer obſcurity to a brilliant ſtation and reputation? The beſt ſituation is found in the crowd; happy they who are allowed to place themſelves in it; ſtill more happy thoſe who have been loſt and confounded with it ſince the moments of their birth!

In fine, is it not gratifying to our vanity to owe our ſubſiſtence to ourſelves, to our talents, and induſtry?

It may be ſaid all the world do not poſſeſs talents: no; but all thoſe who have enjoyed affluence have received an education, and conſequently can have reſources if they are willing to exert themſelves.

I ſhould not wiſh to fill a public ſtation, nor to depend upon the caprices of the

multitude; but the money gained by sedentary labours, without noise, without putting ourselves into the way of notice, without making ourselves conspicuous, is certainly more nobly acquired than that which some years ago was obtained by going to solicit the ministers and their clerks at Versailles.

The fortune which we have by inheritance is not the mark of any kind of merit in the possessor; that we may obtain at a court by the title of *favor*, which expresses a gift, is nothing less than a sort of charity; the money we gain by our own industry is the most noble exchange, and proves, that he who acquires it by this means, must have either talents or ingenuity: this alone is honorable; and it would be excusable even were it to be dispensed with vanity; for they who display the riches they enjoy by inheritance can only say, *Here is what I have found*; and the artist who does the same with his fortune can say, *Here is what I have made.*

We might draw the most precious advantages from adversity: a sensible, pious, and

and reflecting perſon ought neceſſarily in misfortune to become more mature in mind, and more perfect in character. Cicero has ſaid of men, *they are like wine; age ſours the bad, and renders the good better.* We may ſay that misfortune produces on them the ſame effects.

Old age and misfortune are only reſpectable on this very natural ſuppoſition, that age and misfortunes produce uſeful reflections, which ought to give wiſdom.

We love our friends more affectionately and more truly when they are in adverſity; but we love them with enthuſiaſm only when they are in proſperity.

Perſonal advantages do not inſpire tender ſentiments, but they exalt us; and very often thoſe who experience this emotion are miſtaken, and are in reality the dupes of it.

The more I behold Ergaſtes, the more I admire him; I have the moſt profound veneration for him; Ergaſtes is a ſage, the moſt beneficent, the moſt virtuous, the moſt perfect I know.

Very

Very well, Cleon; I like to hear you praiſe Ergaſtes; he is in fact an honeſt man whom you love; he is uſeful to you; he renders you many ſervices; he has the power of rendering you many more: but why do not you make the ſame eulogiums on Alcippus? Why do you extol Ergaſtes ſo often in ſuch pompous terms; and ſo rarely and ſo coldly ſpeak in praiſe of Alcippus; and content yourſelf in ſaying of him, *He has many enemies, poor man! he is much to be pitied!* Ergaſtes is a *ſage, virtuous, beneficent, perfect*; and the only denomination you will at preſent grant the unfortunate Alcippus, is that of *poor man!* Nevertheleſs, I know he has been your benefactor, and Ergaſtes is not. I know that you have been a witneſs to many of the virtuous and beneficent actions of Alcippus; infinitely ſuperior to thoſe of Ergaſtes, which you admire and praiſe with ſo much enthuſiaſm. Whence proceeds this injuſtice? O Cleon! you commit it unconſciouſly, becauſe you do not reflect: I will enlighten you on the ſubject: you will bluſh, and you will correct

correct those sentiments unworthy of you, for your heart is naturally feeling and generous.

Ergastes is in a flourishing situation; and has it in his power to oblige, to render services, and to procure for his friends many of the enjoyments of society.

Alcippus has lost all the means of being useful; he is solitary, persecuted, oppressed, and gratitude can only say of him, *poor man!* Personal advantages and vanity so naturally influence our judgments and our sentiments, that it is impossible to preserve our virtue, at least in all its purity, if we do not often enter within ourselves in order to examine our hearts, and to demand an impartial and severe account of all their emotions. It is by doing thus, that we are enabled to perceive the first traces of dangerous impressions, and to efface them with ease; it is thus we are enabled to suppress evil from its source; and to oppose with efficacy duty and reason against the unjust and unruly inclinations of nature.

There

There are no beings so perfect, who may be able to follow the instigations of their nature without reflection and without danger.

The human heart resembles those subterranean reservoirs destined to contain pure and salutary water; it is necessary to sound it often, in order that it may be purified.

People of great talents and virtue may be persecuted and oppressed, but they cannot be annihilated. Two things alone, in spite of human errors, swim on the boisterous ocean of life—*justice and truth.*

Marivaux, in his jargon so justly criticised, has often said excellent things, among others, this: *That to be good enough, it is necessary to be a little too good.*

This brings to my recollection a similar and ingenious turn by M. de Marmontel: in speaking of pedantic and affected persons who pretend to be witty in all cases, even when it may not be necessary, he says, *It is having a great deal of wit most undoubtedly*

doubtedly to have too much, but it is not having enough alſo.

When I read certain works wherein many falſe things are related, or if the ſubjects be common and expreſſed in terms very far-fetched, I recall to my imagination the dramatic author cited by Voltaire, who could not be perſuaded to ſay ſimply, *the king arrives*, but ſaid thus, *the king bends his imperious ſteps this way.*

La Bruyere and Voltaire are the authors who have ridiculed in the moſt agreeable and real manner, pedantry, affectation, and long diſcuſſions of which no perſon can aſcertain the true meaning.

It is laughable enough for deliberate readers to obſerve the moſt emphatic turgid writers running out in ecſtacies upon the ſtyle of Voltaire; aſſuredly it is impoſſible for them to feel the infinite merits of a pure and natural diction; if their proſe is reckoned good, that of Voltaire's muſt be very ordinary.

Politeneſs ſhould ſerve to conceal all that may be likely to offend or diſpleaſe, it ſhould even expreſs benevolence: but

if

if it appear to expreſs affection and ſenſibility, it degenerates into untruth.

People of weak and ſhallow underſtandings are neceſſarily often ungrateful.

It is allowable that we ſhould ſometimes ſpeak of ourſelves with ſpirit; but it is ridiculous to do ſo with vanity.

Good nature renders old age amiable, but a burleſque gaiety is degrading.

Buffoonery is very unbecoming in old people, and in women of every age.

If it be true that peace and tranquillity are the firſt of all bleſſings, the government of the populace alone is the worſt of all.

By a law of Solon's thoſe who in the times of diſturbances and troubles took no part, were declared infamous; this law was reſpecting the men only, and did not extend to women: certainly in political affairs it is not the duty of women to intermeddle, but to keep their peace. It is only excuſable in them to ſpeak when calumny and perſecution obliges them to explain themſelves.

To

To take neither party is to maintain an abſolute ſilence; but in the midſt of a great effervescence of corruption, to declare aloud in favor of moderation, to be ever impartial, a friend to order, peace, and virtue, this aſſuredly is to take *a part*, and the moſt courageous of all, becauſe it is ranking ourſelves in a ſmall claſs of individuals, and going againſt many numerous and powerful factions.

It is unjuſt and odious to deſpiſe or hate thoſe who do not think with us, when their opinions, although ridiculous and irrational in our eyes, wound neither morality nor humanity:—for example, whether they look upon nobility and hereditary titles as reſpectable or not; that ſuch a form of government is good or bad, &c.: theſe are matters of opinion on which people may differ, equally poſſeſſing good hearts and principles of probity; but to approve of cruelty, vengeance, injuſtice, murder, bloody retaliations, falling on innocent victims; to believe that what is called the intereſt of a nation can poſſibly authorize all kinds of violence and crimes; this

this is abjuring all morality: neither reason nor humanity can tolerate such execrable opinions.

We should not suffer friends to espouse our part in our quarrels, but it would be grievous to be without friends who might be able to moderate us in these respects.

We sooner excuse those who do not take a part in our gentle and tenderest affections, than we do those who will not partake in our indignation when that is well founded: we can but slightly love the first, and the latter we contemn.

A lethargic sleep, always succeeded by death or a convulsive revival, is similar to that sort of tranquillity which is enjoyed during the reign of tyrants.

To *reign by terror*—this was the plan of the most execrable tyrants; this was the maxim of Nero, Tiberius, Caligula, Domitian; and among the French, of Louis the Eleventh, and Robespierre.

The great Condé, when he was yet a child, hearing the wit of Louis the Fourteenth highly praised, said: "*So much the better, for there is no pleasure in obeying a*

"*block-*

"*blockhead.*" We might ſay alſo, there is no pleaſure in being obeyed by ſimpletons; and ſlaves are ſtupid beyond meaſure.

How hateful is pride! it is that which makes deſpots and coquettes.

If the people are ſlaves, they are vile. If they are maſters, they are inſolent and barbarous. If they ſhould be under ſubmiſſion with reaſonable reſtrictions, they are then gentle and good.

We may compare the populace to a child; nothing can be worſe than a child rendered ſtupid by unjuſt conſtraint and extravagant ſeverity, except a *ſpoiled child*.

A lively brain and extreme ignorance neceſſarily produce great folly and many errors; add to theſe a bad heart, and raſcality is the reſult.

The imaginations of the populace muſt not then be our reſource for opinions or advice. As ſoon as they attempt to reaſon they become dangerous, becauſe they know not how to reaſon well; they are unenlightened, they have not time, and it requires a great portion of that to reflect judiciouſly. But is it not neceſſary to deſtroy

deſtroy the enthuſiaſm of the populace ſpringing from a well-founded admiration; that is the only enthuſiaſm becoming in them, becauſe it is an emotion from ſentiment; it is a judgment of the heart, not of the head. The people in a maſs can judge but only from their firſt emotions and from inſtinct, like children.

By the effects of idle vexation, we may judge it to be the moſt dangerous and the moſt inſupportable of all evils. To what vices do not a multitude of people give themſelves up, in the ſole hope of delivering themſelves from vexation and diſquiet!

Nothing is more to be feared than idle diſcontented people, when they are ſtupidly inconſiderate and hot-headed; theſe qualities are not always united, but they may however be found together.

We do not care to guard ourſelves againſt ſuch ſort of people, and they may commit much miſchief before we can ſuſpect the danger.

As moderation is a virtue, it is an admirable decree of Providence, that happineſs

happineſs can only be found with mediocrity.

There is ſcarcely a woman who has not at leaſt a *ſecret of the toilette.*

And there are ſcarcely any ſecrets, but thoſe which our ſelf-love conceals, that are kept with exactneſs.

There are many people who are ſo full of pride, ſo infatuated, that they perſuade themſelves they muſt be hated, unleſs others are charmed with them.

The proud judge of others only according to the opinions which the latter form of them; as ſoon as they are reliſhed by them, then they are *very witty, very virtuous*; if they receive but a ſmall degree of attention, they are very middling ſort of people; if what they chooſe to advance is not directly anſwered, people are *abſurd*, or certainly very *ill diſpoſed.*

Modeſt ſenſible people always judge equitably whether they pleaſe or not; others may pleaſe them if amiable; they ſee merit where it really exiſts, and they can acknowledge it with pleaſure even in their enemies.

It

It is profaning friendſhip to ſay it reſembles love. It is impoſſible to believe that a perſon, who at the age of forty ſtill preſerves a delicacy of taſte, wit, and ſentiment, can ever have been vicious.

Religion is admirable above all in thoſe points which appear the moſt incomprehenſible, and which have given riſe to the ridicule of the impious. As for example; if there were no *eternal puniſhment*, the fate of the juſt and of the wicked would be equal, ſince they would both enjoy eternal happineſs. For what would ſignify a finite puniſhment ſucceeded by immortal felicity? What influence could the ſmall dread of a limited chaſtiſement have over our actions, if we could look forward to happineſs infinite? Or can we be perſuaded that Supreme Juſtice reſerves the ſame deſtiny for the virtuous and the criminal?

The doctrine of original ſin is alſo incomprehenſible; however this doctrine can alone explain human nature; that is to ſay, all the whimſical contrarities of the human heart,

heart, as Pascal has developed it in an enlightened and sublime manner*.

Unbelievers find it an extravagant rigor to be absolutely forbid to do a little ill in order to bring about an essential good, particularly if this little ill should not do hurt to any person; nevertheless, if we permit ourselves to commit this little ill, we may go on by gradation until we are guilty of crimes. We shall rob in order to give away; we shall poison and assassinate for the public good, &c.

That precept which condemns useless words appears alike rigorous; nevertheless all the evils of society, all the injuries which cause humanity to sigh, proceed from an abuse of the gift of speech.

If morality be not a chimera, its principles should form a chain, of which not one of the necessary links could be broken through, without at the same time deranging the whole assemblage.

This admirable succession of principles, ever intimately connected with each other,

* In his Thoughts.

can

can only be found in the writings of the Evangelists: that alone should prove incontestably the truth of religion; and how many other forcible proofs has it not?

We cannot be proud without being ungrateful towards God; to pride ourselves on our gifts is to forget the source whence they spring; and this is an outrage against our benefactor. Ah! rather let us fear to misemploy the understanding and talents with which we are gifted, only to enlighten those who may be deprived of such. All that exists in nature is destined to some utility, either visible or unknown.

God has created nothing without design; he has not chosen to endow every man with a superior mind, because that would have been productive of infinite confusion. there were no others in the world but great genuises, such as Newton, Pascal, Pierre, Corneille, &c. who would be bound to till the ground, to build houses, or bake bread? &c. Men are made to serve mutually; and it is necessary on this account, that there should be an extreme

inequality

inequality among them, with those differences and those incalculable disparities which we remark in their minds, and which we cannot find among animals, who are not made to live in society, or at least whose faculties being extremely limited and contracted, have no necessities beyond what the common instinct natural to their species can supply them with*.

The botanist admires equally the organization of the little field flower and that of the great oak; in the same manner the Christian philosopher does not allow himself to be dazzled with that which strikes the common run of men; it is the sole power and the sole wisdom of the Creator which he admires. Every man who occupies the path of *destination* he has been formed to follow, has an equal right to his esteem; he will praise a man on the use he makes of his talents, and not because he has genius; for we have no greater merit in being clever than we have in being beautiful; we receive from God

* Such as beavers, bees, ants, &c.

alone our ſenſe and genius, and we are moſt deſpicable if we abuſe theſe gifts, ſince the only praiſe we have a right to receive, is founded on the uſe we make of them.

There are two ſorts of people who are naturally inclined to devotion. Thoſe who unite to a cold ſoul (which is incapable of feeling any of the great paſſions), a moroſe temper, and a ſerious and puſillanimous character; and thoſe who unite to a character of deep reflection an extreme ſenſibility, a great delicacy, and elevation of ſoul, and a ſtrong imagination.

The firſt are predeſtinarians, becauſe they like nothing, and are weary of all things. Fear conducts them to God; they think they love him, becauſe they are terrified at the idea of eternal puniſhment, and becauſe they are diſpleaſed with the world; theſe are ferocious, puerile in their devotion, and often even ridiculous.

The ſecond ſort of religious perſons incline towards God with the greateſt tranſport; to love him as theſe hearts do is a natural inſtinct, a neceſſity as much as a duty.

duty. They behold God every where; this ſublime idea is united with all their ſentiments; it may leave them with many imperfections, but they are each day corrected; they are elevated, and are impreſſed with a greatneſs of character by it, which virtue alone will never give. Theſe religious perſons are rare, becauſe the qualities I have juſt deſcribed are not commonly united *; while on the contrary, the *other* ſort form the ordinary claſs; and for this reaſon, in general, *religious perſons* are not liked, becauſe they are cold characters, with gloomy and unamiable minds. It is quite neceſſary that a preacher ſhould be religious and irreproachable in his conduct.

The moraliſt only adviſes virtue. The preacher preſcribes it, commands it, and in the name of the Supreme Being!

* I ſpeak here only in general terms; and I do not the leſs recollect what our faith teaches us to believe, and what our reaſon confirms to us, that God in his beneficence is able to recal the moſt inſenſible hearts, and impreſs them with a love of him.

An author who is irregular in his morals may ſtill have the right to ſpeak of virtue, becauſe we know that he may feel and believe what he ſays, although his paſſions hinder him from conforming entirely to his belief; but we cannot enforce our religious doctrines, when it is acknowledged we have no belief in them, and it is moſt certain that man cannot have a belief who, although he be in holy orders, is ambitious, intriguing, and immoral.

Without firm and invariable principles, it is impoſſible to have a character.

Obſerve vicious people; you may find them, provided they have ſenſe, with fixed opinions, concluſive deſigns as far as perſonal intereſt may not oppoſe theſe; but ambition and other paſſions will with eaſe make them act contrary to their ſenſe and reaſon.

The weak and ſhallow man will vary his ſentiments according to the taſte of thoſe by whom he is governed: the clever vicious man keeps to his own way of thinking, but changes his conduct according to his intereſts; the one is deceived, ſeduced, and goes

goes astray without knowing it; the other is corrupted, but preserves his opinion, and renounces it only in appearance; he often chooses to be of the party he despises; for both these characters the result is the same. He always displays a character who unites virtue to an extensive understanding. To act only according to the dictates of conscience, is the best way of becoming worthy of consideration, and estimable for our steadiness.

Persons who have but middling sense and who are exceedingly vain, like better to suffer themselves to be governed by those who have only an equivocal superiority over them, than by people of acknowledged merit.

This manner of suffering themselves to be conducted is not the most judicious, it often causes cruel regrets, but it appears less, it does not seem so conspicuous, and a proud fool prefers it.

Since my existence I have never seen persons of great character have the fear of appearing to be led; but weak people are

precisely those who carry this fear to an excess; God knows what advantages cunning persons may draw from this folly, which is particularly observable in people of an elevated rank.

A courtier wishing to annoy a friend of the great Condé, said to him, "Do you "know that the malicious pretend to say "that he leads you?"—"Why," replied the prince, "do you say the *malicious*; "the supposition does not the least harm "to us, for I flatter myself there may be "found merit in *leading*, and in suffering "ourselves to be *led* thus."

It cannot be too often repeated to young people, that in all concerns of importance we should never take a decisive part without reflecting maturely on the subject, and consulting others.

One single wrong step may cost us the repose and happiness of our life.

It is impossible to be at the same time the friend of two people who hate each other.

Hospitality is only respected among the rich and the poor, because such people do

do not travel much. If the Arabs, for example, saw travellers incessantly coming among them, they would soon cease to be so renowned for their hospitality.—It is true that a most generous hospitality was established among the richest and best governed nations of the ancients; but all these nations were equally hospitable, so that their hospitality in fact was nothing but an exchange, an universal reciprocation, which certainly took away the principal merit: we ought rather to praise the laws and morals which established hospitality, than the generosity of those individuals who exercised it.

Happy are those nations whose customs produce the result of beneficent virtue!

I shall terminate this Chapter with a trait of hospitality very little known, and at the same time very touching.

I will copy it literally:

"At Athens, after the death of Thera-"menes, the last supporter of liberty, the "thirty tyrants committed horrible cruel-"ties; they laid hold of the rich, one after "another, and brought false accusations

"against them, for which they were pu-
"nished by death, in order to confiscate
"their possessions. They even cut the
"throats of strangers, that they might
"seize their riches.—Fear caused the half
"of the inhabitants to leave the town.—
"The Lacedemonians, for the purpose of
"ruining this republic, of whom they were
"jealous, encouraged these extremities,
"and authorised them,—As they were
"exceedingly powerful, they arrogated to
"themselves the right of commanding
"all throughout Greece; they published a
"decree, by which the thirty tyrants were
"permitted to claim the unfortunate fu-
"gitives as the discharge of all their
"debtors; under pain of incurring a pe-
"nalty of five talents for whoever should
"refuse to deliver them up. The iniquity
"of this decree caused all the towns to
"revolt: however, the greatest number,
"fearing the power of Sparta, became
"subject to them, but the Argians, indig-
"nant at the barbarous animosity of the
"Spartans, and moved with the sorrowful
"condition of the fugitives, were the first

"who

who received them with every ſort of "humanity.' The Thebans carried their "generoſity ſtill farther, threatening with "public chaſtiſement whoever ſhould ſee "paſs a fugitive Athenien without aſſiſting "him to the utmoſt of his power*."

* Diodorus of Sicily, Book ſixth.

CHAP. XVI.

Of the Love of Glory and the love of our Country.

A PASSIONATE love of glory is an ardent deſire of diſtinguiſhing ourſelves, of being ſpoken of, and obtaining praiſe. The ſame motives, the ſame deſires, agitate and diſturb the boſoms of coquettes, fops, the rich and vain glorious, and the poor and ambitious.——The pride of the man of genius often produces ſublime actions, and often alſo great crimes; the pride of fools produces only puerile follies and deſpicable errors.

A proud blockhead cannot pretend to *glory*, becauſe he has not even a juſt idea of it; virtue alone can give us true glory, and we only obtain it when we do not pretend to it; pride never can acquire it.

The

The proud man who poſſeſſes great talents has no merit in contemning frivolous praiſe; it is not from an elevation of ſoul that he diſdains ſuch praiſe; it is becauſe he is acquainted with his deſerts, and has higher pretenſions.——To be remarkable is not ſufficient for him; he will be admired, he wiſhes to excite aſtoniſhment and enthuſiaſm.

Nothing is greater egotiſm in a man than the paſſionate love of glory; that is to ſay, poſſeſſing the paſſion of being ſtrikingly renowned; to obtain his deſire, he would turn the whole world topſy-turvy, if it ſhould be neceſſary and if he were able.——He ſlightly regards the miſeries of a million innocent creatures.

It is the love of glory which has made ſo many conquerors: in other words, the greateſt ſcourges of mankind. It is the love of glory which has formed thoſe pretended heroes, thoſe ſanguinary men who have ravaged the world, and whoſe terrible power has produced only death and deſolation.

Nothing ſolidly good, nothing truly uſeful, can ſpring from the paſſions.

All

All paſſions are dangerous, becauſe paſſion is an exceſs, an intoxication.

It is only certain particular circumſtances, dependent on ſome events and on chance, which may ſometimes render the paſſions uſeful; have they not always been productive of a thouſand times more evil than good?

Of all the paſſions, that of the love of glory has occaſioned more crimes of an atrocious nature than the reſt.

Alexander, ſurnamed *the Great* by the lovers of glory, this Alexander cauſed the ſhedding of many a tear, and occaſioned the flowing of much blood; he alſo committed more injuſtice, more murder, and enforced more penalties than thoſe wretches whom we call highwaymen (and whom the laws juſtly condemn to capital puniſhment) would be able to commit in ſeveral ages.

The love of glory renders men unavoidably ambitious.

We ſhould be ſtruck with horror, could we ſee into the depths of thoſe men's hearts under the dominion of the love of glory.

——If

——If we had been able to penetrate all the ſecret thoughts of Alexander, Julius Cæſar, Charles XII. of Sweden, &c. we might have experienced ſuch an emotion.

But ſhould it be ſaid that the love of glory differently conceived would be productive of virtuous conſequences; I anſwer, no; becauſe paſſion never reaſons; it precipitates us naturally into extremes; it makes us act without principles, and ſuffers us to be carried away with whatever is dazzling, and with whatever flatters us; becauſe, in fine, for want of a lawful means of ſatisfying ourſelves, we do not heſitate to ſeize thoſe which may be criminal.

How many *only* celebrated men might have been great men, even in the opinions of the wiſe, if fortune had ſeconded their deſires!

Coriolanus, poſſeſſed of the love of glory (had it not been for the injuſtice of his fellow citizens), might have been the firſt among the Romans; but his pride would not ſuffer him to ſupport exile; he wiſhed

to

to avenge himself with *eclat*, and became a traitor.

Among the French the Constable de Bourbon had the same fate. How many examples of the same nature might we not cite! if these men, not making glory their idol, had chosen virtue instead, injustice would not have caused them to forsake the fidelity due to their country.

While we conduct ourselves according to fixed principles, we invariably, with an unshaken constancy, follow the path we have entered; because we are guided through it by the light of our reason, which proves to us, that that alone is honourable.

It is impossible, in the effervescence of a violent passion, to maintain a judicious calmness; it is impossible to be free from error, when we are no longer able to consult and follow the counsels of reason.

It is easier to vanquish the passions than to moderate them; when we desire to make use of all our strength and gather it together, we can always find enough; but when

when we would only employ a ſmall portion of it, where is the rule that can direct us to a right meaſure?

It is then a chance whether this ſmall portion be ſufficient?

Modern philoſophers, and their numerous partizans, pretend to ſay, that *the paſſions well directed* are of the greateſt utility. This idea ſhould obtain ground, it is ſo convenient! it would ſuit ſo many perſons!

But how might *the paſſions be always well directed?*

How ſhould we be able to *guide a ſhip properly* without ſails, maſts, and a rudder? ſhould we combat the winds ſucceſsfully in a ſudden ſtorm or tempeſt?

The ſtrength of man is in his reaſon, all which darkens and impairs this precious faculty weakens him, leſſens and renders him contemptible; neither can a violent paſſion accord with reaſon.

It is not ſenſibility alone which diſtinguiſhes men from animals; an animal alſo has

has feeling, can be attached, and knows how to love.

That which constitutes the soul then, is not that sentiment; this divine breath of the Creator is a ray of his supreme intelligence; he gave us reason, which alone ennobles sensibility; an animal loves through instinct; we love by choice; since reason is nothing else than the faculty of comparing, of judging, and consequently of being able to choose.

All the dignity of man resides in his reason; a man then who is always rational, is alone an honor to humanity.

The impassioned man is never rational; he is then degraded, and can only inspire compassion or contempt.

According to the modern philosophers, it appears that if we could preclude the violent passions from society, it would be quite nothing; they have the misfortune of seeing only *apathy* in wisdom, in reason, and virtue.

And what can be more usefully active than virtue guided by reason? virtue! which

which is alone the result of reason, for all our understandings, all our wise reflections, all our profound meditations, all our real interests, should make us love it, and draw near to it.

The love of glory has occasioned many brilliant actions.

Virtue would also produce the same if they were useful, and does produce an infinitely greater number which are sublime and secret.

If a writer of genius be only animated with a love of glory, he will unavoidably be partial; he will often write without truth; he wishes to acquire partizans and admirers; he wishes to obtain the prize, and to be crowned.

Virtue alone can produce works like those of Fenelon, Massillon, and La Bruyere, &c. pure and admirable, where we cannot perceive the appearance of flattery, or even of timid caution.

All writers must be unworthy the title of moralists who maintain the passions to be useful, or who pretend to say there are *unconquerable*.

conquerable passions; these common-place arguments, dangerous as well as false and contemptible, tend only to overthrow all the foundations of morality.

Modern philosophy sets forth the passions and luxury; but religion condemns them; and every being who is capable of reflection and meditation, should see (independently of the lights of faith) that the evangelical system of morality is the only true one.

Let us then only esteem, only admire reason; this celestial gift was granted to us that we might place all our actions under its guidance; this reason a blessing from our Creator, should be humbled in the presence of his Supreme Majesty, or to express it better, it should instruct us, that it is only given to us to seek and adore him, and not to comprehend him; it is reason which teaches us that the mysteries of religion should be impenetrable for us, and that it should only develope, and explain those precepts of morality, which may serve to form and render our principles perfect.

To

To ſerve our country is our duty; to love it is a virtuous and natural ſentiment; but when this ſentiment appears to be a *paſſion*, it is then nothing but the love of glory, that is to ſay, a diſguiſed ambition.

We ought to ſacrifice all our intereſts, fortune, and ambition, and even thoſe of our family, for the good of our country; we ſhould expoſe our life in its defence; we ſhould ſtrive to be uſeful; in fine, we ſhould maintain our fidelity, notwithſtanding injuſtice, exile, and proſcription; theſe are the duties of a good citizen; they are ſacred, and we cannot without being criminal refrain from the performance of them; but it was unbridled paſſions, and an execrable fanaticiſm, not a virtuous love of their country, which inſpired the deteſtable actions of Brutus, Timoleon, &c.*

The

* For ſome years paſt, the murders committed by the two Brutuſes have been greatly extolled; but in crying up theſe unnatural actions, it was not obſerved that the moſt virtuous amongſt the Romans at that time highly diſapproved them.

If

The ambition of *surpaſſing* a cotemporary is infinitely more agreeable, infinitely more encouraging than that of *equalling*.

This is the reaſon why the children of very great men feel but few incitements to glory.

If hiſtory were more ſtudied, and better underſtood, the generality of pamphlets of the preſent day, would not be ſo filled with falſe citations, and numerous abſurd, and often atrocious reaſonings.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Of decorums and worldly reſpect.

DECORUM conſiſts in always demonſtrating in public, and in the preſence of witneſſes, a reſpect for religion, civility, and the laws and cuſtoms univerſally received, when they do not oppoſe morality.——Virtue and a love of order make us naturally obſerve decorum. Good taſte alone will make us keep to this obſervance. To ſhake off the yoke of decorum is openly proving ourſelves to be either impertinent or vicious; and deſpiſing general opinions is to inſult the public.

Princes, and women particularly, ſhould be ſlaves to decorum.

It is quite as inexcuſable to fail in decency, as it would be to ally ourſelves with the paſſions.

Decorum

Decorum does not exact virtue, it only demands that we ſhould wear an air of reſpect towards her; nothing can be more reaſonable, and vice itſelf cannot refuſe her homage, except in feigning to forget her.

To affect an auſtere virtue, to act the part of piety, is not a ſubmiſſion to the laws of decorum, it is being a hypocrite.

To make a parade of doing good is to be vain-glorious.

To give an example of all the actions poſitively preſcribed by religion and humanity, is to fulfil an indiſpenſable duty. ——We ſhould neither *offend* our neighbour by humility, nor *pleaſe* him through oſtentation. By obſerving decorum we ſhall keep the juſt mean of theſe two extremes.

That which in ſome ſocieties is called *delicacy of ſentiment*, is nothing but decorum refined, and brought to perfection, which teaches us what we ſhould conceal, and when we ſhould be ſilent in order to avoid wounding and giving ſhocks to others.

Great

Great ſenſibility united to a juſt and reflecting mind, produces extreme delicacy.

Without delicacy it is impoſſible to pleaſe, and we cannot be truly beloved.

Nothing augments delicacy like dependance joined to ſentiment, to the intereſt, and conſequently the deſire of pleaſing; for this reaſon women in general poſſeſs infinitely more delicacy than men.

Moreover the particular modeſty preſcribed to them ſtill refines their delicacy. ——There are many things which they can only half expreſs!

Depraved public morals by aboliſhing decorum, deſtroy at the ſame time, the graces, politeneſs, delicacy, and taſte; they conſequently occaſion an irreparable injury to letters: the corruption of morals ever announces the decline of literature.

Worldly reſpect is a ſentiment which inclines us to the obſervance of decorums; a very laudable and neceſſary ſentiment, but which is often confounded with a puſillanimous fear extremely dangerous, that of avoiding ridicule.——It is non-

ſenſical

ſonſical to deſpiſe a *well founded ridicule*; it is equally wrong to dread a *ridicule ill founded.*

There is a certain rule which ſhould be our guide.

To differ from the univerſal and received cuſtoms, in rational things, or things merely indifferent, is from careleſſneſs giving cauſe for a well founded ridicule: but to brave ridicule and mockery, in order to preſerve decency, or for the ſake of doing what is truly uſeful, this is to have a character, this is knowing how to think and to act.

Worldly reſpect miſconceived, has been the occaſion of more impiety, more libertiniſm, than even the paſſions.

As for example, if the faſhion eſtabliſhes itſelf for the ladies to clothe themſelves in a manner which is very indecent, women of the polite world muſt not balance or reject ſuch a faſhion.

If cuſtom authoriſes a dance ſo immodeſt that it offends men themſelves; young modeſt perſons muſt not refuſe to dance it, without running the riſk of paſſing

fing for *prudes*; how much more is it preferable to ſuffer the accuſation of *prudery*, which is moſt generally only an eulogium from certain people; but the accuſation of effrontery is ever the moſt horrible and inſulting reproach a woman can meet with.

As a ſtranger, I ſhall not permit myſelf to criticiſe the *Waltzes*, but I may be allowed to ſay that this dance appears intolerable to German writers of a ſuperior merit, and who have never been accuſed of great rigor, amongſt others, the author of *Werther* and Mr. Jacobi: "We can-"not" ſays the latter, "boaſt much of "our decency, or diſavow that our women "and girls are trained up to dance with "the moſt complete careleſſneſs, licenti-"ouſly encloſed in the arms of men, to the "ſound of ſoft and intoxicating muſic.

"In this unruly whirl, morals and de-"cency ſeem to be forgotten, and when "even an innocent creature expoſed in "this manner remains pure and unſtained, "can ſhe reflect without horror, that ſhe "may have been the ſport of the imagin-

" ations of thoſe young people to whom " ſhe has been delivered up in ſuch a " dance.——It is to be wiſhed that our " young women who ſtill retain an idea of " modeſty, could be locked up in a corner " to hear the converſations of the ſame " men to whom they abandoned themſelves " with ſo little reſerve.

" Alſo the lover of Sophia Sternheim, " *Werther*, does he not ſwear that never, " were he to periſh by it, ſhould the young " women he loved, and whom he ſhould " regard as his own, be permitted to " dance the Waltz with any but him-" ſelf."

It will undoubtedly be thought that this criticiſm is ſeve.., but it does not come from me, I have even ſoftened many of the expreſſions.

I will only add one reflection, which is, that this criticiſm has been written theſe twelve or fifteen years, and that ſince the ſuppreſſion of petticoats, and the preſent faſhion of *light drapery in the Grecian taſte*, the licentiouſneſs of this ſort of dance is not diminiſhed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of Prejudices.

To have prejudices: this is an accuſation moſt dreaded by the proud and fooliſh; and to avoid which they often renounce the moſt uſeful and reſpectable principles; what is this but a *prejudice?* though few are conſcious of it.——The prevailing mania of the preſent age is never to reflect, and to wiſh always to be rational.

To have *prejudice*, properly ſpeaking, is to judge of a thing before we examine or comprehend it; and this is conſequently judging ill.——Therefore, the unbeliever who only reads on the ſubject of religion, the writings of its detractors, and who judges by them that religion is falſe; this unbeliever moſt juſtly deſerves to be accuſed of prejudice, inſtead of the Chriſtian,

who has profoundly meditated holy writ, and who like the great Newton, may have read ſeven times in ſucceſſion the bible and the fathers; and who, in fine, has weighed all the proofs of religion, and the ſophiſms of the impious; he is not at all prejudiced, for he judges after a long examination, and by a knowledge of the cauſe.

If we underſtand by prejudice, all ideas falſe or true, admitted with or without examination; no man can term a religious belief a *prejudice*, becauſe no man can prove geometrically that it is falſe.

As for ſcientific opinions, the moſt celebrated and learned in general have been thoſe moſt prejudiced (at leaſt excepting modern philoſophers); for in raiſing ſyſtems they adopt all ſuppoſitions and many falſe ideas, which bear the appearance of probability; neither do the ſciences advance better than the pilgrim of Loretto, who always took three ſteps forward and two back.

The influence of the moon over the ſea has been rejected, and again admitted; the

the form of the terreſtrial globe has been changed ſeveral times; the ſcriptures have been attacked for a length of time on account of the great number of ſtars mentioned in ſome parts of it: the learned tell us with preciſion that there are only one thouſand and twenty-two. The new inſtruments and clearer obſervers have juſtified the truth of the ſcriptures however.

They have for ages treated as abſurd fables, a number of facts in natural hiſtory advanced by Pliny, and others of the ancients, acknowledged as truths at this day.

Therefore, *to have prejudices* is not a matter which ſhould cauſe ſo much dread, ſince the moſt learned are ſubject to the ſame.

With regard to prejudices on matters of morality, theſe are alone pernicious and important, and when morality is ſeparated from religion, it becomes abſolutely arbitrary, and maintains with equal ſucceſs, opinions as well againſt as for it. Thus do the modern philoſophers. They have even overthrown the *true and right injunctions*, to ſubſtitute inſtead this horri-

ble maxim: *do unto others in place of good the leaſt ill you may be able**.

The only moraliſts free from prejudice, are thoſe who make Evangelical precepts the baſis of their morality.

The moſt groſs and extravagant being in ſociety would be he, who in things which neither hurt morals nor morality, would only approve or like to follow whatever appeared juſt and rational; this being would reject as fooliſh all that approached delicacy; he would not heſitate to aſk charity each time he failed of money; he would do a thouſand things of this ſort, which are not in themſelves criminal; but which nevertheleſs are conſidered as enſigns of littleneſs by thoſe who have elevated minds.

Theſe opinions are however but *prejudices*, yet they ennoble our ſentiments, they diſpenſe a refinement throughout the commerce of ſociety, they give a greater value to beneficent actions, and more dignity

* J. J. Rouſſeau.

in

in misfortune. Are there then useful and respectable prejudices?

There are no odious prejudices but those which attack morality, and serve to relax its obligations.

We should employ all our forces in the destruction of such, and we ought on the contrary to respect and strengthen the prejudices, or in other words the sentiments of delicacy which serve to exalt virtue, and which tend to render mankind better, consequently more happy.

CHAP. XIX.

Of Death.

MEDITATIONS on death can only be uſeful and ſalutary in a long and dangerous illneſs, which has not deprived us of our intellectual faculties.

To meditate on death with any effect, it is neceſſary to contemplate it near with a mind impreſſed with the awful truths of religion. The contemplation is not without ſweetneſs; it produces a ſublime emotion, of which no other ſentiment can give an idea; it elevates and fills the whole ſoul; it confounds the imagination, but at the ſame time exalts it to the moſt Heavenly fervour.

How elevated, how affecting are the reflections of a good man on his death-bed!——Yet a moment and Heaven ſhall open on his eyes; his ears ſhall be ſaluted with

with its rapturous harmony; he ſhall be united to all eternity to the only ſource of infinite perfection! that active and ſearching mind ſhall behold truth unveiled in all its ſplendour; that ſuſceptible ſoul which nothing here could ſatisfy, ſhall enjoy the felicity of admiring, and of loving without meaſure and without end!——What hopes! what anticipations!

Whilſt we are in perfect health the night of the tomb makes but little impreſſion on the imagination; it is on a ſick bed, it is when labouring under the weight of ſome painful malady, far removed from our connections, from all human conſolation, that we can reflect to any purpoſe on this important ſubject.

In the laſt moments of thoſe philoſophers void of religion, nothing is to be ſeen but terror and puſillanimity*, or pride and

* It is well known in what a daſtardly manner d'Alembert met death, although he died of a very lingering illneſs. His friends did not dare to adverti ſe him of his danger; it was wiſhed that he ſhould have left legacies to ſome of his domeſtics, but it was

oſtentation. They are detached from every thing but themſelves; they act, they ſpeak only to inſpire admiration in the ſurrounding ſpectators, or to become ſubjects of wonder to future readers.

The hour of death is not a time for pleaſantries, we ought to die with dignity.

To affect to die with perfect indifference muſt be either the overweening inſolence of pride, or the effect of ſtupid inſenſibility.

was not poſſible to him to him the idea of making his will.

Read the memoirs of Madame de Roland; during all her captivity, and in hourly expectation of death, ſhe thought not of her daughter, bequeathed her no inſtructions for her future life; yet ſhe wrote volumes, in every page of which is to be ſeen burſting forth the ſpirit of party, animoſity, and the moſt ridiculous vanity. Memoirs frivolous and ſcandalous, filled with falſhoods, licentious details, unintereſting anecdotes, and diſtorted portraits. At the awful moment of quitting life are theſe ideas which ought to employ a rational being, to employ a mother about to leave an only daughter then but thirteen years old; about to leave her a prey to misfortune, and in what times!

Were

Were we forced to tear ourſelves from our family and native country to go and ſettle in ſome foreign land, we ſhould not bluſh to ſhew regret, why then aſhamed to feel it in dying?

It is only for ſaints to quit life without regret, but far from dying with indifference, or without thought, that deciſive moment is to them the moſt important epocha of their lives, and nothing can withdraw their attention from thoſe great ideas which ought alone to occupy it at that momentous criſis.

I can perceive nothing but an oſtentatious pride in that circumſtance cited by Seneca of the philoſopher Canus; who, when condemned to death and awaiting the ſummons for his execution, employed thoſe laſt precious moments in playing at cheſs, and it is ſaid won the game. His adverſary, I ſuſpect, from a love of the marvellous, made no great efforts to diſpute that glory with him. How much more truly great does Socrates appear in my eyes, when after having drunk the hemlock he exerted himſelf in the care of conſoling his friends, and

and converſed with them on the immortality of the ſoul!

To beſtow panegyric on falſe virtues is to hold up to admiration extravagance and hypocriſy.

I recollect in the memoirs of the Cardinal de Retz, to read this excellent obſervation: *a man of true genius elevated to an eminent ſituation, never commences by little things to diſcharge a great employment.* Might it not alſo be ſaid that a noble ſoul endued with ſenſibility, will never terminate *the great employment* of life by *little things* uſeleſs or frivolous?

Funeral pomp are two words which ought never to have been united. Pomp in a ceremony which demonſtrates to us in ſo ſtriking a manner the nothingneſs of human grandeur and the abſurdity of vanity!

The moſt neceſſary and moſt beautiful ornament of a ſuperb mauſoleum is an illuſtrious name; but nothing appears to me more ridiculous than to laviſh braſs and marble, and to expend treaſures to inform travellers and ſtrangers that an obſcure perſon who, during his lifetime, has never done

done any thing to entitle him to celebrity, died in ſuch a year. Theſe monuments confer no more honour on the deceaſed than the little funeral eulogiums of *citizen Garat* do to the reputations of thoſe whom he has praiſed. There is however this difference, that theſe eulogiums always ruin the printer who publiſhes them, whilſt a magnificent tomb may at leaſt immortalize the ſculptor*.

The laſt wiſhes of dying perſons ought to be dictated by religion, by benevolence, gratitude and friendſhip; they ought to

* Citizen Garat has exerciſed his pen on all kinds of ſubjects; there are to be found in his works, if not a great variety of talents, at leaſt an aſtoniſhing variation of ſentiments. Under the ancient government he made the panegyric of a great man, the Chancellor de l'Hopital, as *the moſt loyal of ſubjects amidſt times of faction.* Since the revolution he has written the eulogium *of Danton.*

If ever citizen Garat gives the world a complete edition of his works, he may take as motto *Long live the king, ſucceſs to ſedition*; or this ſtill more energetic and more juſt, *Long flouriſh virtue, ſucceſs to crimes.* This laſt would in general be perfectly ſuitable to all the modern philoſophers ſuch as Voltaire, Diderot, Helvetius, J. J. Rouſſeau, &c.

expreſs

expreſs the deſire of conſoling thoſe who ſurvive; all other conſiderations, as to what they leave behind them, are puerile or blameable. It is natural to ſuppoſe his intentions muſt be virtuous, who has but a moment to live, and who is about to appear before the Supreme Judge of all heart. It is this perſuaſion which has ever rendered *dying injunctions* reſpectable, and has made them be regarded as ſacred.

The laſt will of the late Monſieur de la Condamine contained this clauſe: "My "body ſhall be opened, if from any ob- "ſervations made during my laſt illneſs, "anatomiſts think they can by this means "acquire any new or uſeful lights in the "progreſs of their art, and in conſequence "ſerviceable to humanity." This is the ſpirit in which all the articles of a laſt will ought to be drawn! Alas! of what importance is it to us that our bones ſhould be depoſited in ſuch a place, our heart in ſuch another!——Are theſe ideas which ought to employ him who touches the utmoſt term of his exiſtence; of him who bids

bids an eternal adieu to his family, to his friends, to the world in short, which is about to vaniſh for ever from his eyes?

To hope that after our death our friends ſhould preſerve a tender remembrance of us, is the natural wiſh of ſenſibility; but to deſire to leave behind us thoſe deep traces of grief and deſpair never to be effaced, to pleaſe ourſelves with the idea that our friends ſhall ever remain inconſolable for our loſs, is the inhuman wiſh of pride.

A religious man on his death-bed is the moſt reſpectable of human beings. He abjures with ſincerity every emotion of hatred or of vengeance; he feels all the emptineſs of ambition, of pleaſure, and of fame; nothing but virtue is eſtimable in his eyes; he alone is the true philoſopher.

There can be no real magnificence in the moſt pompous obſequies, unleſs religiouſly performed; if nothing in thoſe ſolemnities impreſſes the idea of religion, it preſents only the dreadful image of annihilation.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

Of Suicide.

AND I alſo will again offer my opinions on ſuicide*. I ſhall employ neither far-fetched phraſes nor *metaphyſical* bombaſt; I ſhall merely ſet forth in the ſimple language of truth what humanity dictates on this important ſubject. With reluctance I find myſelf conſtrained to criticiſe a *female author*; a liberty I have never before allowed myſelf, becauſe I have never before diſcovered in any of their writings principles of a dangerous tendency.

I have ever done juſtice to the talents of each of this deſcription with a ſentiment of peculiar intereſt and pleaſure; as a female, and an author myſelf, I feel honored

* In ſome of my other works I have long ſince ſpoken on this ſubject; I ſhall endeavour to avoid repetitions here.

by

by their ſucceſs, ſorry for their errors; and I ſhall combat the opinions of the apologiſt, or rather the *panegyriſt* of ſuicide, with regret, with eſteem, and with all that conſideration which is her due.

The modern philoſophers have reſpected neither religion nor morality; yet I know none of them who have approved of ſuicide, at leaſt openly; and certainly none of them have ventured on the eulogium of this crime. It is nevertheleſs true, that their fatal doctrines, in propagating materialiſm, have in conſequence multiplied the number of its votaries; and in effect never has this gloomy mania been ſo prevalent, ſo univerſal, as it is become in our days, and particularly within the laſt ten years, as may be eaſily aſcertained by reading the French and Engliſh papers publiſhed during that period. It is impoſſible to help ſhuddering at the bloody liſt of all theſe victims of ſuicide ſince the epocha I have mentioned *; even *children* are of

* I reckoned ſeven inſtances which were made public in the little town of Schleſwig alone, in the courſe of eighteen months.

the

the number! The Engliſh papers of 1797 (*The London Chronicle*) mention two children, one eleven, the other twelve years old, who hung themſelves in the vicinity of London! Horrid prodigy! what! infancy itſelf deſpoiled of innocence, deprived of hope, ſhall it thus renounce the ſweet inſtinct of nature! thus reject with horror the cup of life which ſcarce its lips had touched, and ſo near the cradle dig its grave! O unfortunate mothers! I hear your lamentable cries; they echo to the inmoſt receſſes of my heart! and it is in this barbarous age—this age in which ſo many weeping families groan over misfortunes ſuch as theſe; in which ſuicide has torn from ſo many mothers, wives, and children, the objects of their tendereſt love, or the ſole ſupports of their exiſtence; it is in theſe deplorable times, that an author arrived at maturity, a woman poſſeſſing ſenſibility of ſoul, dares to call ſuicide a *ſublime act*. Hear her own words:

"Great criminals may be intrepid in "danger; this is the effect of intoxication,

"it

"it is an emotion, a means, a hope, an "action: but these same men, though "the most miserable of beings, scarcely "ever put an end to their sufferings by a "voluntary death; whether it be that "Providence has not seen fit to grant "them this *sublime* resource, or whether "that there is in guilt an ardent selfish-"ness, which, without giving enjoyment, "excludes those elevated sentiments with "which we must of ourselves renounce "life*."

The only thing that is perfectly clear in this extraordinary passage is, that, according to the author, suicide, so far from being a crime, is a *sublime* action, which those only are capable of who have *very elevated sentiments*; the author concludes her developement of this opinion by exclaiming:

"Alas! how difficult would it be to "avoid feeling an interest for that man, "greater than nature herself, at the mo-

* *Of the Influence of the Passions upon the Happiness of Individuals and of Nations*, by the Baroness *de Stael de Holstein*, page 244.

"ment

" ment when he rejects what he has re-
" ceived from her; when he makes uſe of
" life to deſtroy life; when he is enabled
" by ſtrength of mind to ſubdue the moſt
" powerful inſtinct implanted in men, that
" of ſelf-preſervation: how difficult not to
" believe him poſſeſſed of generous emo-
" tions who voluntarily embraces death,
" when it is conſidered that actual villains
" are incapable of ſuch an action! A
" noble ſoul muſt feel a degree of ſuffering
" in not being able thoroughly to deſpiſe
" that being which had inſpired it with
" horror*."

I am ſorry to be obliged to inflict on Madame de Stael this ſpecies of ſuffering, by informing her of what ſhe alone ſeems ignorant, that the moſt execrable villains, the greateſt monſters that have ever exiſted, were all *ſuicides*. Sardanapalus, Nero, Meſſalina, and the ungrateful and falſe diſciple the traitor Judas †. Theſe are beyond

* Page 245.

† Sardanapalus ſet fire to his palace, and precipitated himſelf into the flames; Nero killed himſelf with the ſword of his ſecretary Epaphroditus; Meſſalina

beyond contradiction the moſt diſhonored, the moſt infamous names that have been tranſmitted to us by hiſtory: thus we may behold *actual villains* who were capable of this *ſublime* action: and whoever knows hiſtory thoroughly, muſt alſo know, that almoſt all ſuicides were tyrants, parricides, murderers; in fine, atrocious villains.

But what meaning can we annex to thoſe expreſſions: *that man is greater than nature herſelf*, becauſe *he rejects what he has received from her*, and becauſe *he makes uſe of life to deſtroy life?* Does greatneſs then conſiſt in baniſhing the ſentiments of nature; not merely when it anſwers no uſe to others, but when it tends to the prejudice of ſociety? Is this the way to become *greater than nature herſelf?* What praiſe then can be given to the virtuous man who ſacrifices all his

Meſſalina ſeized the ſword of the tribune ſent to apprehend her, and ſtabbed herſelf; and Judas, after having received the price of his crime, unable to ſupport the weight of his remorſe, went and hanged himſelf.

intereſts,

intereſts, all his paſſions, his life itſelf, to the public good?

Again; what meaning do theſe words convey, to be *enabled by ſtrength of mind to ſubdue the moſt powerful inſtinct implanted in man, that of ſelf-preſervation?* Every ſentiment which we extinguiſh or ſtifle is *ſubdued by ſtrength of mind*; and the ſoldier who firſt mounts the breach, and expoſes himſelf to the fire of the enemy, is alſo *enabled by ſtrength of mind to ſubdue the moſt powerful inſtinct implanted in man.*

Ought we to praiſe that ill humour and miſanthropy which makes us *reject* the gifts of a benefactor? But the modern philoſophy is incapable of admiring the man truly *ſublime*, (ſuch, for inſtance, as the late Monſieur de Lagaraie,) who, looking on fame and pleaſure in their true light, voluntarily renounces all the gifts of nature and of fortune, diſtributes all his wealth to the unfortunate, buries himſelf with them in the receſſes of an hoſpital, and there devotes himſelf to the ſole employment of tending and being uſeful to them.

Madame

Madame de Stael says again:

"There is something which displays "sensibility and a philosophic mind in the "action of self-destruction, *which de-"praved beings are utterly* strangers to."

Here is a passage *utterly* incomprehensible. *There is some thing which displays sensibility in the action of self-destruction?* There is, in reality, some thing precisely the contrary; for by a voluntary death we must resolve to abandon for ever all that we love, to plunge into misery all by whom we are beloved. Suicide is an act of the most decided selfishness: to free ourselves individually from pain, or from a weariness for life, we sacrifice all to that desire—friendship, love, the sentiments of nature, and duties the most sacred. What sensibility is displayed in such an act?

As to *philosophy*, (the modern kind I mean,) I confess it is a system very favorable to suicide; for the man without affections or attachments here, who is impious towards Heaven, and discontented with life, commits a very natural action in rushing voluntarily on death: he alone is neither

neither weak nor raſh in doing ſo; he is conſiſtent. Amongſt the ancients the ſophiſt Hegeſippus exhorted his diſciples to ſelf-murder, when life had no longer any charms for them: he was for this reaſon called the *orateor of death*. This tragic epithet might with juſtice be given to our modern philoſophers, whoſe horrid principles produce the ſame conſequences.

Madame de Stael thinks ſuicide not only *ſublime* but *neceſſary* in republics, and to *ardent ſouls*. This is the manner in which ſhe explains this ſtrange doctrine:

"I fear I ſhall be accuſed of having "too often, in the courſe of this work, "mentioned ſuicide as an action worthy "of praiſe. I have not examined it as to "its agreement with religious principles, "always reſpectable; but in a political "light only. It is, in my opinion, that in "republics that ſentiment which led the "ancients to deprive themſelve of exiſt- "ence is neceſſary; and that in particular "ſituations, ardent ſouls, who yield to the "impulſes of nature, require this reſource "to look forward to, that they may not become

"become depraved by misfortune, or ſtill "more, perhaps by thoſe ſtruggles which "they make to avoid it*."

Madame de Stael adds: that in yield- "ing to love, it is only thoſe men who "are capable of the reſolution neceſſary "for ſelf-murder, who can, with the "ſlighteſt ſhadow of wiſdom, attempt this "great road to happineſs†."

The author confeſſes that ſhe has not examine ſuicide as to its agreement with religious principles, *always reſpectable*. Since ſhe thinks this agreement *reſpectable*, ſhe ought not to have omitted ſuch an examination. She has then conſidered it only in a *political light*; and, in an inveſtigation of this nature, ought humanity to have been forgot?—Forgot did I ſay?—Ah! in that diſcreet apology is not humanity cruelly violated? In holding up ſuicide to admiration, is not ſelf-murder recom-

* Page 158. This is rather obſcure: we muſt ſuppoſe the meaning to be, that inſtead of combating a criminal paſſion we ought to deſtroy ourſelves.

† Page 158.

mended? And, in daring to recommend it, is it not blood that is required?

God forbid that I should attribute to the heart the errors of the judgment: in this horrid paradox I perceive nothing more than a mere want of reflection; and I am perſuaded that the author will be eager to retract opinions too haſtily advanced, and the conſequences of which make humanity ſhudder.

The author ſays, that *ardent ſouls who yield to the impulſes of nature*, require this reſource to look forward to, *that they may not become depraved by misfortune.* To *yield to the impulſes of nature*, means here to give a looſe to the paſſions; and every being who does ſo muſt become depraved; and above all, in the great road to happineſs.

As to the *neceſſity* of ſuicide in a republic, it is impoſſible to divine the reaſons on which it is founded; and the author gives none. The religion of the pagans certainly made no crime of ſuicide; but all their great philoſophers diſapproved

proved of an action which humanity alone muſt ever reject.

Even in thoſe times political conſiderations often obliged legiſlators to frame laws particularly ſevere againſt ſuicide*; and all good hiſtorians have remarked, that whenever ſtateſmen have embraced a voluntary death, it has always proved fatal to the public weal; and that the republic was ruined beyond reſource by that of the latter Cato. In effect, if ſuicide deprives a country of a great man, or of a good citizen only, it is aſſuredly very hurtful to ſociety; and if it falls upon a guilty wretch, it only ſnatches him from the hands of the law, and from that exemplary puniſhment which the public

* Among others, that which ordained that the bodies of all women who had made attempts upon their own lives ſhould, after their deaths, be expoſed naked in the public places: a decree which, to the honor of thoſe remote ages, put a ſtop among the females to the rage for ſuicide, which had become almoſt univerſal. This circumſtance alſo proves that the act of ſelf-murder does not require a *ſublime* courage, ſince the weaker ſex are ſo often and ſo eaſily induced to the perpetration of it.

ſafety renders neceſſary: thus, then, even in a *political light* ſuicide is as detrimental as it is criminal in a religious and moral ſenſe.

Madame de Stael, who beholds ſuicide only as an action *ſublime, wiſe, and neceſſary*, aſſerts that it can only be the reſult of that *profound reflection*, that *contemplative calm*, of which the really guilty are *incapable*.

And this is the reaſon they are not ſuicides: "The guilty man," ſays ſhe, "is "doubtful and agitated in all his thoughts " * * * * * " * * * † and in ſuch a ſtate there "never exiſts that ſpecies of contemplative "calm, of profound reflection neceſſary to "inveſtigate truth, and from that inveſti-"gation to form irrevocable reſolutions‡."

This aſſertion is contradicted by experience; for many acts of ſuicide, far from being the reſult of *profound reflection*, and

† Theſe points mark the ſuppreſſion of a paſſage abſolutely unintelligible, on the thoughts of a guilty man.

‡ Page 224.

con-

contemplative calm, are the effects of ſudden emotions and violent fits of rage or deſpair: beſides, Madame de Stael contradicts herſelf; for in the ſame work ſhe ſays:

"A perſon who gives himſelf up to "any exceſs, acts at firſt by impulſion; "but when arrived at its height, it always "produces a ſort of tenſion involuntary "and terrible; when got out of the line "of nature, in whatever ſenſe it may be, it "is no longer the paſſion that commands, "but the contraction which ſuſtains them."

Here is a paſſage which ſtands in much need of a commentary. What is called *getting out of the line of nature?* Is it not *out of the line of nature* to perform actions which appear ſupernatural to common obſervers, and equally ſo, actions which are monſtrous in the judgment of all? Heroiſm, then, and the baſeſt wickedneſs, are equally *out of the line of nature*. Decius precipitating himſelf into a gulph to ſave the republic, and Brutus aſſaſſinating his father, are both *out of the line of nature*; ſince

the one triumphed over nature, the other violated her laws: but can it be said that it was not the *paſſion* which *commanded* theſe two actions? and that inſtead of the love of fame, (well or ill underſtood,) it was an *involuntary tenſion*, or *contraction*, which *ſuſtained them*. What difference does the author find between the paſſion and what ſhe calls *tenſion* and *contraction*? What, again, is meant by *being carried to exceſs by impulſion*? I do not find fault with the irregularity of the expreſſion; but I aſk again, what is this *impulſion* which differs alſo from *paſſion*, from *tenſion*, and *contraction*?

One thing, however, may be clearly diſcovered in this paſſage; which is, that the author means to ſay, that all exceſs is produced by a violent movement of the paſſions, and conſequently by a movement without reflection: this thought, thus *tranſlated*, is not new: but it has at leaſt the merit of being juſt, and abſolutely contradicts all that the author has advanced upon the *contemplative calm*, the *profound reflection* of which *ſuicide is the reſult*; ſince,

since, by her own confession, suicide is *out of the line of nature.*

How many contradictions, false reasonings, and errors, might people spare themselves, were they to read more deeply, reflect maturely, and make it an invariable rule never to stray from the fundamental principles of morality!

The author condemns herself when she says (p. 220): "Had this simple principle been more deeply felt; namely, "*that man has not the right to do evil that good may come of it,* we should not have "seen so many human victims immolated "even on the very altar of the virtues*."

* *The altar of the virtues* in France! There they are only seen overthrown. This is expressed with sublimity in the admirable lines of the Abbe de Lille:

Yes! ye who dare from Heaven usurp its power,
O'erthrow the altars of eternal truth,
Ye vile oppressors of a bleeding world,
Tremble! ye are immortal!
And ye unhappy victims of the hour,
Assured your God with watchful care regards you,
On earth your fleeting passage soon shall end:
Be comforted; ye are immortal!

It is a ſtrange inconſiſtency to acknowledge that it is not permitted to *do evil that good may come of it*; and yet to recommend ſuicide. To excuſe humanity, not from the intentional but the actual evil conveyed in ſuch advice; it might be ſaid, that we ſhould ſee with pleaſure an unhappy man, weary of life, free himſelf from the inſupportable burthen. This would of itſelf be a ſtrange ſentiment; and I doubt whether ever ſoft compaſſion has produced ſuch a one in a female boſom: but ſtill there is an infinite difference between an involuntary wiſh and a ſerious counſel. We may be allowed not to grieve for the death of the unfortunate; but it is certainly a crime to furniſh the means to a miſerable wretch who wiſhes to deprive himſelf of life, or to encourage him in the horrid deſign: what is it then to exhort him to it, and to endeavour to prove to him that ſuch an attempt is an action *wiſe*, *neceſſary*, and *ſublime?*

If it is allowable to exhort to ſuicide, if it is deemed greatneſs of mind to deprive ourſelves of exiſtence when we believe

lieve its evils irremediable; we muſt alſo approve of the ferocity of thoſe unnatural ſavages, who, when their parents arrive at extreme old age, cut their throats, that they may free them from the ſufferings cauſed by infirmities and decrepitude, ſufferings which admit not of cure. We muſt admire too thoſe inhuman fathers who ſtifle their infants at their birth, if they exhibit any deformity of body, or if their future fate in life promiſes nothing but miſery. Barbarities ſuch as theſe, which make humanity ſhudder, are the natural conſequences of a ſentiment which approves of and exhorts to ſuicide, that the unfortunate may free themſelves from their miſeries.

Let it be conſidered, beſides, if happineſs is uncertain, misfortune is rarely without remedy. Time may conſole us; fate may change; and he who believes himſelf the moſt unfortunate of beings may yet become happy.

I know that the man of impetuous paſſions, a prey to ſufferings, reaſons not thus; he perſuades himſelf that his wretchedneſs

is

is without example, and without resource; and that nothing can ever alleviate his affliction: such is the language of passion; but is it that of reason? is it that which a moralist ought to employ?

Our sufferings are but too often imaginary, too often the effects of error, and too often wounded pride has produced the fatal act of suicide.

Thus, then, did this sanguinary resource wound neither religion nor morality, still it is inexcusable to praise or to advise it, because it is an act of the highest imprudence; an act which necessarily produces the most fatal consequences. We should feel the tenderest pity, and weep for the misfortune of a family from whom relentless war had snatched a beloved father, an adored son; but does not suicide also make widows and orphans? and to fill up the measure of the woes of these unfortunate victims, they are deprived of all those consolations which reflected fame and honour might offer them.

If there is grandeur of soul in suicide, there is consequently meanness in resigna-

tion;

tion; if he is *greater than nature* who, unable to ſupport misfortune, ruſhes on voluntary death to free himſelf from it; Sardanapalus amidſt the flames of his palace; Sardanapalus is a divine being; and Beliſarius deſpoiled of all, blind, begging, proſcribed, and ſubmitting to his fate without a complaint or murmur; Beliſarius is a coward!——

Although in thus combating ſuicide I have voluntarily deprived myſelf of my ſtrongeſt force, in not employing the victorious arms with which religion might furniſh me, yet I dare believe that Madame de Stael, on reading this criticiſm, will with her whole heart diſavow thoſe pernicious errors which from the firſt ſhe muſt have deteſted, had ſhe felt all the conſequences of them. The moſt enlightened and virtuous writer may be miſtaken, but will never heſitate to acknowledge it; and of all the homages that could be paid to truth, candour, ſuch as this, is certainly the moſt noble and moſt touching.

The reſult of theſe reflections is, that in every point of view, *political*, *moral*, and *religious*, ſuicide is equally criminal.

This

This mania, as weak as culpable, is, as I have before ſaid, the horrid and deſpicable act of the moſt complete ſelfiſhneſs; it is a proof of the blindeſt rage, or of the moſt odious and ſtupid inſenſibility; it is never produced but by total imbecillity, or the weakneſs of deſpair; not by true courage, ſince it is ſo often committed by the moſt abject, the moſt cowardly of wretches, by many women, and even by children. In ſhort, it is at once an outrage againſt Heaven, againſt reaſon and humanity. That ſuicide which appears the moſt excuſable from its motives. is ſtill a crime; and true philoſophy cannot, on the contrary, reſpect and admire the man greater than fortune, who remains immoveable and ſerene in the midſt of its reverſes; for, as Montaigne has finely ſaid on the ſame ſubject, *Virtue quits not its path nor loſes its way, however great the ſtorm.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

Of the Advantages of a good Education.

LIFE is often but a fatal gift: the favors of fortune are frail and dangerous; a good education is an ineſtimable benefit, which can of itſelf give a value to all others, and the place of which nothing elſe can ſupply.

In adverſity a good education furniſhes honorable and certain reſources, and it equally teaches us to enjoy proſperity. Who can fix bounds to the gratitude due to a preceptor who has fulfilled all the duties of one? what ſentiments, what conduct towards him can acquit the immenſe debt; can repay that unlimited attention, thoſe ſolicitudes, thoſe labours, that activity, that vigilance, thoſe unremitting cares of which you were, during ſo many years, the object?

If

If gratitude ought to engrave on the memory, in indelible characters, the remembrance of the ſlighteſt benefit received, how is it poſſible to forget that long ſeries of obligations ſo cloſely linked together, the happy influence of which extends over all the future life!

Every thing muſt tend to recal to the virtuous pupil, the idea of his firſt inſtructor, ſince all his actions retrace the precepts he received from him; ingratitude can only find place in the boſom of the depraved; he forgets his inſtructor becauſe he has long ceaſed to remember his leſſons; he forgets that tender friend of his infancy and of his youth; that tutelary genius who ſo long watched over him, as the impious forget their Creator; he endeavours to baniſh the recollection becauſe it is become troubleſome to him, becauſe it overwhelms him with ſelf-reproach; the confuſed remembrance of thoſe precepts he had neglected, diſturb and affright him; in order to ſtifle his remorſe, and give a looſe to his paſſions, he muſt begin by being ungrateful: the good feel none of this; they know

know the value of early and virtuous inſtructions, they alone reap the fruit of them.

Yet I do know it poſſible to cheriſh and preſerve the virtues, yet to neglect and forget the ſource from which they were drawn! I know it poſſible!——yet ſcarce can comprehend how ſuch a poſſibility can exiſt.

Oh, inexplicable young man! you who are indebted to a good education for virtues, information, accompliſhments, how have you been able to efface from your memory that benefactor whom all theſe ought to point out to you as the author of each of theſe advantages! Are you in adverſity? who furniſhed you with reſources to baffle its power, has given you that courage which ſupports you, that ſtrength, moral and phyſical, which enables you to meet undiſmayed, every fatigue of body, every pang of mind? who was that vigilant, that tenderly attached guide who conducted you in the road ſacred to virtue, who cleared the entrance, ſmoothed the way, and for you ſtrewed all its paths with flowers?

flowers? who taught you to deſpiſe luxury and effeminate ſoftneſs? to whom do you owe the developement of your reaſon, the expanſion of your mind? that memory ſo richly ſtored, by whoſe care was it thus cultivated? how well has that memory been able to retain all the various words of different languages, all the intereſting facts of hiſtory?—ah! to friendſhip alone is it unfaithful!——If your probity, your brilliant accompliſhments have had any effect in rendering you happy, is it to your birth or to blind chance you are indebted for them? Do you enjoy the luxury of doing good, of ſuccouring the unfortunate? Oh! in thoſe moments ſo exquiſitely ſweet, how is it that your heart does not recal the image of that friend who firſt conducted your ſteps to the humble roof of poverty! who firſt rendered you ſuſceptible of the delicious emotions of compaſſion! who firſt taught you the enjoyments of goodneſs and benevolence!

That you may feel in its full force all that you owe to this guide, inſtructor, and friend, ſuppoſe for a moment that the care

of

of your infancy and youth had been confided to mercenary hands; ſuppoſe that flattery had corrupted your judgment, that effeminacy had enervated your frame, that no principles had been inſtilled, no talents cultivated, no inſtructions been beſtowed on you, what would you have been to-day?

But what is it I do, and what are my hopes?——None.

There are many amiable qualities, I know, which may be taught with ſucceſs; but I know, too, that gratitude is not to be *learned*. It is a celeſtial virtue of which the Creator has reſerved to himſelf the gift. How ought I to praiſe and bleſs him for having beſtowed it on beings ſo dear and precious to me, and whoſe ſteady friendſhip conſoles me for every privation!

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

Of Perſons of Intrigue.

All perſons of intrigue have ambition; but none of this deſcription poſſeſs genius.

Genius is always accompanied by an ardent paſſion for whatever it purſues; and paſſion ſacrifices all to its object, even actual ſucceſs and preſent fame. When Newton, devoted to abſtract ſcience, employed all his genius in compoſing a work with the certainty that *only three men in all Europe would perfectly comprehend it*; Newton aſſuredly laboured not for actual fame. The innocent and uſeful paſſion for ſtudy is the ſole one that can ſtamp ſelf love with a character ſo great.

I do not certainly pretend to ſay that this paſſion ſo pure cannot exiſt independent of genius, for I am myſelf a proof of the contrary; but I will ſay, that as well as genius,

genius, it excludes all taſte for intrigue, and that it deprives us of all the means neceſſary for intriguing.

Nothing in the world abſorbs ſo much time as intrigue: it is not enough to devote ourſelves entirely to it at home, to carry on extenſive correſpondences, to receive and flatter all the inſipid crowd that may be uſeful to us, to pay court to all people in power; it is, beſides, neceſſary to enter into the world, to ſtudy to pleaſe, to make friends and partizans; but what double labour, what additional exertions muſt be uſed, to be at once a perſon of intrigue and an author, and more particularly in times of faction! we muſt then ſtruggle not only againſt rivals, but againſt numerous hoſts of envenomed enemies: what contrivances, what meanneſſes, what added falſhoods does ſuch a ſituation call for! literature and ſtudy are neglected, are forgot; the object is only to acquire protectors and panegyriſts, to gain over journaliſts, and multiply libels. The ſpirit of party places intriguers in their true ſphere; it developes all their faculties, it calls forth all their little talents; without

legitimating

legitimating the means employed, it places their characters in a less ignoble and less despicable light; it serves at once as a pretext and an excuse for their duplicity; it changes even the names of their lowest vices; deception and knavery, the most notorious, are no more than wise and political conduct; hatred and vengeance, only natural sentiments; aspersions and calumnies but the result of a passion justified by its motives in the eyes of all who feel its influence; in a word, to shew yourself on every occasion partial, intolerant, and unjust, is only to be true to your cause.

People of sensibility, and who are incapable of intrigue, when persecuted by fate, may have sincere and tender friends; it is all that they desire; they demand no services, they seek no supporters, defenders, or apologists; they wish only to be beloved. Intriguers regard friendship as a mere mercenary convention; they exact no delicate attentions, no sentiment, no esteem; they wish only for creatures entirely devoted to them, and they obtain them:

because

becauſe they are feared, or much is expected from them, they have it materially in their power to hurt, or to render ſervice. We cannot be ſincerely *devoted* to any but an *actual* benefactor or an intriguing friend; it is towards ſuch that gratitude appears lively, and friendſhip ardent: a friend is defended with warmth, both in ſpeaking and writing; ſuffrages are ſolicited for in his favour, and every opportunity ſeized to make him appear in the moſt flattering light: is he an author, extracts are made from all his works, they are praiſed to the ſkies, and all the journals are full of them; but all this zeal is excited only by the baſeſt intereſt, by perſonal intereſt: the ſame ſervices are expected in return, they are claimed when ſtood in need of.

It muſt neceſſarily be then, that perſecuted virtue, in times of faction eſpecially, muſt for a ſeries of years become the victim of calumny. Falſhood accuſes her with effrontery; truth, timid or conſtrained, dares not raiſe its voice in her favour; her friends are ſilent; there is nothing to counteract

teract the schemes of her enemies, nothing to oppose their triumph; they multiply at their pleasure groundless imputations, which are on a thousand occasions disproved by facts acknowledged and public; it matters not, new fables are invented, and circulated with a kind of magic rapidity, and are repeated even by those who feel no animosity; simple credulity spreads, without meaning it, all the envenomed slanders of malice!——Ah! without the consoling sentiment of real piety, who could support the overwhelming weight of injustice, the dreadful torment of being hated without a cause!——In certain situations, such a misfortune can only be eluded by intrigue; it must then be submitted to with steady and unshrinking patience.

A taste for the arts, and a passion for study, hold out to oppressed innocence inexhaustible resources, and the sweetest consolations. It must however be confessed, that in the present day this noble passion never finds in friendship a pleasing solace.

To cement the ties of intimate attachment, the tender sentiments of solid affection,

tion and invariable steadiness of conduct, are not sufficient; friendship exacts unremitting attentions, and would not even have this absolute devotion felt as a sacrifice. Formerly friendship was less exacting, and of a character more sublime; two souls, united by esteem and sympathy, never repeated assurances of eternal friendship; yet they felt that the contract was inviolable; superficial professions are suspected, from thence proceeds the necessity of their being constantly renewed; a solemn and sacred oath is never pronounced but once. To what did this deep felt engagement mutually bind them? to defend a friend at the peril of life, to follow him into exile, to share not only his sorrows but his fate. And what was the recompence of such powerful proofs of attachment? to rejoice in the fair fame of the object so highly esteemed, to be associated in it, and in a manner to identify it as his own, and in return for unbounded affection to rest assured of invariably meeting the same; noble and affecting security! the sweetest charm of friendship; a charm which

which love can never know! What does friendſhip, as at preſent underſtood, require of its votaries? conſtant reciprocal viſits, volumes of letters and complimentary billets; ſo that thoſe people, the moſt completely unoccupied in rational purſuits, are the moſt perfect friends. Thus the lover of nature and of the arts, he who in ſolitude cultivates his mind and his talents, who delights in literature and meditation, will never acquire ardent and zealous friends. In vain ſhall he have made them the greateſt ſacrifices; in vain been ready to quit all in the hope of being uſeful to them; in vain ſhall he often even break off from his beloved employments; if he does not renounce them altogether, he has done nothing. He will be bitterly reproached with his taſte for retreat; his fondneſs for his books, his writing table, his pencils and his muſic, in preference to the pleaſures of diſpoſition, will be imputed to him as a crime; he is called ſavage and inſenſible; he might make himſelf agreeable in ſociety, but he withdraws from it; he deſires neither to captivate

nor

nor to ſhine, he ſeeks only ſolitude and peace; theſe are ſingularities and faults which are inexcuſable. Will the *friends* of ſuch a man defend him with warmth, if they hear him attacked by envy or malevolence? no, certainly; they will content themſelves with ſaying: *it is his own fault*; had he diſpoſitions *more ſocial*, would he ſhew himſelf oftener, would he take the trouble of making *uſeful friends*, and were he *capable of cultivating them*, he might eaſily triumph over all his enemies; but to give way to *ſuch caprices* is not the way to deſtroy *violent prejudices*. And of what conſequence is it to deſtroy them when they come to be deſpiſed, when all feeling on this ſubject is ſtifled, when injuſtice, ceaſing to oppreſs the ſoul, inſpires only contempt and indifference; when, in ſhort, after having well ſtudied his own heart, he is fully convinced that he would be utterly incapable, for a ſingle month, of following the plan of conduct which perhaps would require many years of ſteady perſeverance in order to his juſtification. O! ye whom intrigues perſecute and oppreſs;

ye whose hearts are warmed with the love of peace and order, of virtue, and the sweet sentiments of universal benevolence, beware of forming the project of repelling cabal by cabal; were you even to conquer your scruples on this point, you would still fail in your design. Have you tasted the charms of study, of meditation, and of elegant talents, it will be impossible for you to support the weariſomeneſs of such an undertaking; all those whose natural dispositions have led them to it, will surpass you in the abilities requisite, they will triumph over you, and not able either to conquer or to hide your disgust, you will soon be forced to abandon the conteſt, from which the only fruits you will have reaped, will be the shame and regret of having engaged in it. No, no; it is in solitude alone that you will find not only tranquillity but happineſs; continue to add still new dignity to those talents which are now disputed and envied, by a happy use of them; endeavour to stamp perfections on that character so much defamed, and those sentiments so little understood; ma-

lignity

lignity has painted you in falſe colours; apply yourſelf to the taſk of rendering this picture every day more unlike, and more prepoſterous; be patient and expect everything from time, which ſeldom fails to produce confuſion to guilt and triumph to innocence.

It is above all with princes that perſons of intrigue in general ſucceed the beſt; there nothing offends them; they require no encouragement to attract them; they need neither to be invited nor eſteemed, to be introduced is enough; are they repulſed, ſtill they perſiſt; are they baniſhed, ſtill they return; their obſtinate adherence overcomes all reſiſtance, and in the end they are not *admitted* but *tolerated*; this is all they deſire, it opens to them a field for cabal; even though acquainted with their principles, it is dangerous to liſten to them; they imperceptibly impreſs on their hearers unfavorable opinions of thoſe they attack; it is deemed a ſufficient degree of incredulity to believe only the half of what they advance, and moſt frequently the whole is falſe.

In theſe unfortunate times of diſturbances and ſuſpicions, princes ought to make one ſimple reflection, that among all thoſe ſtrangers to whom they ſhew a generous hoſpitality, it is whimſical that thoſe alone who have an honorable reſource in their own talents, and who keep themſelves conſtantly retired, are almoſt always accuſed of ambitious views. But who are the accuſers of theſe peaceful and ſolitary beings? Perſons who are in continual motion; who, by dint of intrigue, have penetrated into the cabinets of miniſters, the courts of princes; who have obtained penſions, places, and favors, or who warmly ſolicit them; whilſt thoſe they accuſe take no ſtep of this nature, aſk for nothing, pretend to nothing, but live in the moſt profound retreat*.

* It would be as abſurd as unjuſt, to ſay that all who deſire and who obtain penſions and places are perſons of intrigue; they may be ſolicited with dignity, and then it is honorable to ſucceed. I ſay only, that thoſe perſons ought to be the leaſt ſuſpected of ambition who aſk for nothing; and who are fond of retreat, ſtudy, and independence.

But

But, thank Heaven, there are ſtill princes capable of making theſe reflections: princes who may be addreſſed directly, not through the medium of interceſſors, and with every hope of ſucceſs in obtaining an aſylum; of which the mildneſs and equity of their government are the guarantees of its ſecurity.

If it were poſſible to perſuade people of intrigue that merit and talents may exiſt where there is no ambition, they might ceaſe to be miſchievous and dangerous; but this is what they will never believe; and in proportion as they fear rivals, they diſcover formidable enemies in thoſe the leaſt diſpoſed to enter into competition with them. Thus, then, they eternally nouriſh the horrid inſtinct of malignity; and the utmoſt perfection of this baſe diſpoſition is, to lie with effrontery, and calumniate with ſucceſs.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of Travelling[*].

THE beſt uſe a young man can make of his firſt moments of liberty, after his education is finiſhed, is to travel, if accompanied by a perſon who poſſeſſes good ſenſe and information. He enters the world with more ſucceſs; and meets at once

[*] I have written for the uſe of travellers and fugitives a little work which has been publiſhed, but which they have taken the liberty of printing in a manner totally different from that I preſcribed. I intended it ſhould have been in one volume, French and German; inſtead of which it has been lopped, mutilated, and a part of it inſerted in another work, of great merit it is true, but to which I was quite a ſtranger. Some preliminary inſtructions of conſiderable extent, and not I think, without intereſt, have been retrenched. A ſecond edition has been given, in which all the original text appears, but without the German tranſlation; which has deprived the work of its greateſt utility, and fruſtrated

once with that kind of flattering conſideration ſo gratifying, if his firſt introduction into it is after having made the grand tour; provided he is free from thoſe fopperies which pedantry and folly neceſſarily produce. A traveller is always intereſting, if he is neither ſelf-ſufficient nor very talkative; the veracity of a perſon of exceſſive volubility is, and not without reaſon, always called in queſtion; and if he voluntarily enter into long narratives, he is for that reaſon much ſuſpected of overſtraining truth; as curioſity cannot be excited unleſs confidence is firſt inſpired, he attains this double end, only by appearing unaffected, modeſt, and reſerved. Young perſons above all ought to ſpeak of their travels only when interrogated; people like to aſk queſtions of

fruſtrated the real deſign with which it was written. All this was done, not only without my conſent, but without my knowledge. But I do not complain; for it has been done with the beſt and pureſt intentions; but I ought to make this public declaration, becauſe it is the truth. There are in this chapter eight pages taken from the work of which I have ſpoken, in order that I might bring together all my thoughts on the ſame ſubject.

travellers, and liſten with pleaſure to their anſwers; but they become exceſſively tireſome, when they relate minute particulars which nobody deſired to hear.

Before ſetting out to viſit ſtrange countries, we ought to be thoroughly acquainted with our own, that we may be enabled to make compariſons, beſides its being the moſt natural proceſs; it would, however, without doubt, make foreign wonders appear leſs dazzling in our eyes. How many young Frenchmen are there who imagine that only in Switzerland or England are to be ſeen picturesque views, grand caſcades, grottos, rocks, and mountains, who might have ſeen the ſame objects, and perhaps much finer, in our ſouthern provinces, in Franche-Comté, in Auvergne, or Burgundy! Even on returning from Italy, they muſt admire thoſe noble monuments of antiquity with which France abounds; and indeed the whole tour of France will be always the moſt pleaſing and moſt entertaining that can be made.

In travelling for pleaſure, for health, or (which is peculiar to this age) from neceſſity,

ſity, to reap inſtruction from all that is ſeen ought to be the principal object; this cannot well be accompliſhed without keeping a journal containing moſt of the particulars; if this eſſential point be neglected, the greater the number of new or intereſting objects which preſent themſelves, the more the ideas which remain of them will be confuſed; all will be confounded in a head the beſt organized; time, places, monuments, and perſons; you will loſe the pleaſure of recollecting with preciſion any thing you have ſeen or heard; you cannot even ſpeak of them in a manner that will either inſtruct or intereſt, with the ſtricteſt regard for truth; you will tell circumſtances abſolutely falſe; and be taken for a liar without ever having had the deſign of lying. This is what happens to the greateſt number of travellers; who, in general, are leſs deficient in veracity than in memory.

To make a journal which will be of real utility, it is not enough that you write down every night what you have ſeen during the day, you ought alſo to take

particular notes in a memorandum-book of whatever you ſee worthy of obſervation; for inſtance, if in a morning you viſit ſeveral churches, you will moſt probably confound in your memory all the different pictures and monuments they contain, if you do not as you go on make theſe detached notes. In the ſame manner, in a carriage, you ought to ſet down every object that you paſs by, which you would wiſh to recollect. Many travellers, contenting themſelves with writing at large every night, have had their works printed full of inexcuſable miſtakes; the travels in Italy of the Abbe Richard have this fault; the book contains many things truly valuable, and it may be eaſily ſeen by the ſtyle of the author that he never has the deſign of deceiving his readers; the very nature of his inaccuracies even proves it, for it is not from enthuſiaſm or a love of the marvellous that he is thus unfaithful; ſometimes he tells us that ſuch a ſtatue is of red marble, then it is of white; that ſuch another is of braſs, afterwards it is of marble; now a certain monument is in ſuch a city, then in another, &c.

When

When you take up your reſidence for any time in great cities, you ought to read over the hiſtory of the countries in which they are ſituated; peruſe alſo attentively the deſcriptions of the public monuments which they contain; but be cautious in adopting the judgments paſſed upon them, which are generally very erroneous in thoſe little pamphlets. As to ſociety, that of ſcholars, men of letters, and artiſts, ought to be preferred to all others by a traveller; converſation is often more inſtructive than books; but he ought to inveſtigate ſubjects, and not yield too light credit upon every occaſion; every thing that appears extraordinary requires confirmation; and every neceſſary information ought to be gained of a circumſtance before it be inſerted in a journal. A fault too common among travellers is, loſing their precious time in recounting what is paſt, and what they have done in their own country, inſtead of informing themſelves of thoſe things of which they are ignorant; it would ſeem that the object of their going abroad was to inſtruct ſtrangers, not

to

to receive inſtruction themſelves; this is a certain means of becoming weariſome to every body, and of returning as ignorant as they came.

Would you have your ſociety courted by all thoſe who know how to think, (and of what importance is the opinion of others?) be natural, unaffected, and unaſſuming; avoid that flattery which praiſes all with exaggeration, without diſtinction, and which always renders the flatterer contemptible; avoid faſtidiouſneſs too, and above all, that fondneſs for pointing out faults, which will make you hated; be always ingenuous and ſincere, but let it be with prudence and politeneſs; be often ſilent; praiſe ſometimes; and never enter into any criticiſms but ſuch as are gentle and moderate; thus ſhall you avoid offence to all.

Never appear aſtoniſhed at cuſtoms which differ from thoſe of your own country; this aſtoniſhment always carries an air of cenſure; and, beſides, does no credit to your underſtanding: do you expect to find at Moſcow the ſame cuſtoms which

which are eſtabliſhed at Rome? Are you a fugitive deſpoiled of all? If your ſoul is great and courageous, no part of your demeanour will announce ſurpriſe, regret, or deſpondence; the caprices of fortune only degrade us when we appear humbled by them; deſpiſe the puerile vanity of inceſſantly dwelling in converſation on the ſtate of your former fortunes; in ſhort, bear your change of ſituation like a traveller, who, on a journey, is ſometimes obliged to quit a good inn and take up with a miſerable hovel for the night.

Are you calumniated? You have your choice of two parts; the one is to pay your court to the great, to extend your connexions, to gain partizans and protectors; for however little amiable you may be, you will eaſily ſucceed in all this, by devoting your time excluſively to ſociety; and above all, by concealing under gaiety of countenance, and by diſſembling with a good grace, that contempt with which its inſipidity inſpires you.

The other part for you to adopt is, to deſpiſe the calumny, to brave whatever perſecu-

perſecutions may reſult from it, and to content yourſelf with the teſtimony of your own conſcience, and the eſteem of thoſe you love.

The firſt line of conduct may ſuit thoſe whoſe ſuppleneſs of character and timidity of temper fit them for it.

The ſecond is better adapted to thoſe who unite to ſtrength of mind an ardent taſte for ſtudy; and theſe, after much reflection, and many ſtruggles with themſelves, will ever return to their firſt principles, and conclude by thinking, that it is better after all, ſometimes to run the riſk of becoming victims to the wickedneſs of men, than to renounce uſeful purſuits, and to ſacrifice inclinations of the nobleſt and moſt delightful nature. Innocence, by a little addreſs and ſome exertions, might perhaps eaſily juſtify itſelf; but its pace is ever ſteady; nothing weighs heavy, nothing diſturbs it, all is at peace within! it waits with a kind of virtuous indolence, till juſtice is done it; ſooner or later, it knows that time muſt dry up or reſtrain the impure torrent of calumny; in this expectation it

it dwells ſecure in the protecting care and under the watchful eyes of the Supreme Being, and repoſes with calm delight on the boſom of friendſhip.

I do not adviſe fugitives, even thoſe who are fond of ſolitude, to fix their reſidence far from towns; beſides, that an *inſulated* ſituation is always deficient in thoſe reſources of which moſt fugitives have need, that manner of life, of which I have had a long experience, has many inconveniences for ſtrangers; ſeperated faom their neareſt ties, from their beſt loved friends, their correſpondence becomes ſo precious and ſo neceſſary; and far from towns it is of courſe more irregular, and more expenſive: if they are ſick, there is no aſſiſtance near; if they have talents, they are perpetually in want of thoſe things which might ſerve to apply them to uſe: to ſum up all, they muſt even renounce reading; books are not to be procured, and how diſpenſe with theſe in a profound retirement?

And beſides, this kind of life is far from being economical; one is ruined in the poſtage

poſtage of letters, the carriage of parcels, and the paying of meſſengers; one's life is ſpent in giving commiſſions which are almoſt always ill executed; one is expoſed to the wearifomeneſs of waiting for, and the chagrin of not receiving what was expected, which produces a number of little diſappointments; ſo much the more unpleaſant, as they are perpetually renewed; and in abſolute ſolitude all theſe things, trivial in themſelves, become ſerious affairs; for the vivacity of our affections and deſires are always proportioned to our ſituations, and it is natural to attach the ſame degree of importance to every thing which eſſentially, that is to ſay, which habitually employs us.

As to young perſons of a literary character, who travel with the deſign of publiſhing their remarks on the different countries they paſs through, they ought to be acquainted with all claſſes of ſociety, and live alternately in towns and in the country: it is only by becoming domeſticated in cottages that they will acquire a juſt idea of the characters and manners of peaſants; but

but for this purpoſe it is alſo neceſſary to learn their language, which is not, however, very difficult, ſince the vocabulary of their ſimple converſations is always very limited; they may be judged of, not only from the ideas they expreſs, but from the kind of jargon they employ, and even from the accent with which it is uttered. For inſtance, the people of Paris, like all other people, whether of towns or the country, have a language peculiar to themſelves; theirs is copious only in expreſſions of joy, gaiety, impatience, mockery, the pleaſures of the table, and of good cheer; an obſerver might conclude from it that the people were ſprightly, joyous, turbulent, frivolous and inconſiſtent; and they would not be miſtaken in this judgment. The voices of the people of Paris are more loud and hoarſe than thoſe of any other that I know, which to me appears very natural; both theſe effects are cauſed by their impetuoſity; noiſy in their joy and in their anger, ſpeaking always with a tone of importance, and with vivacity; they are inceſſantly ſcreaming and exclaiming, and ſo become hoarſe.

The

The people of Picardy who are mild, and the Flemings who are phlegmatic, have voices less rude, and tones more composed. There exists in Paris a class of people who have formed a language for themselves distinct from all others, and which is spoken only in the precincts of the markets; the women who use it are called *Poissardes* (fish-women); this language is of such a nature that it would not be possible to quote a single sentence of it; it consists only of obscenities, and the most horrid imprecations that can be dictated by rage and cruelty; for these women, void of principles and morals, are in general violent and ferocious.

Travellers are incessantly talking to us of national character, and suppose they can judge of the character of every individual of a nation, from having studied those of the people of a single town or province. This is a great error; there may exist a *national spirit*, (as for instance, in England,) and there may be national character, in states as limited as the petty republicks of Lucca and St. Marino; but there can be no national

national character in an extenſive country divided into large provinces. A Norman, a Gaſcon, an inhabitant of Champagne, or of Auvergene, &c. are all equally French; yet each of theſe people have a totally diſtinct character: the ſame may be ſaid of all the others. Let it be obſerved by the way, that the more the bounds of a ſtate are extended by conqueſt, the more ſtriking will this diverſity become.

Thoſe who wiſh to reap any improvement from travelling, ought not then to neglect any of thoſe obſervations which ſo eaſily eſcape ſuperficial underſtandings. To be qualified to write a book of travels, which would leave us nothing further to deſire, requires a multiplicity of talents, and a ſtore of information which never meet in the ſame perſon; it is neceſſary to poſſeſs at leaſt a taſte for the fine arts, and for literature; to underſtand drawing, architecture, and the views of nature; to be well verſed in natural hiſtory, and in botany; and to have profoundly ſtudied hiſtory and mythology.

As

As to the ſtile in which travels ought to be written, it ſhould, I think, be elegantly pure, but ſimple, conciſe, and ſerious: epigrammatic points, language too flowery, or too highly impaſſioned, ought to be interdicted travellers as well as hiſtorians; becauſe both the one and the other ſhould endeavour to inſpire their readers with confidence; and becauſe impartiality, correctneſs and a ſcrupulous fidelity, is exacted equally from both; brilliant talents may embelliſh theſe indiſpenſable qualities, but can never ſupply their place. Enthuſiaſm is always juſtly ſuſpected; it forms the principal merit of an ode, a poem, or a rhetorical diſcourſe, but it is very much miſplaced in a book of travels; to wiſh to appear a univerſal genius (and that often in a pamphlet of two hundred pages) and to diſplay erudition where it is unneceſſary, is to be a pedant; to be very eloquent, and very profound in writing a letter, is to be obſcure, diffuſe, and totally out of character in ſuch a compoſition. In writing hiſtory to affect to exhibit at once the

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ſound ſenſe and extenſive views of a ſtateſman, with the grace, the lightneſs, and delicacy of a profeſſed wit; to be ſuperficial and inconſiſtent, ſhews want of diſcernment and want of dignity. And laſtly, in a narative of travels to make a parade of *philoſophy*, *fire*, *energy*, exquiſite *ſenſibility*, with political talents, &c. is to write a romance fantaſtic and inſipid, without plan, without imagination, and without intereſt. It muſt be confeſſed it is high time to retrench in this ſpecies of compoſition thoſe ecſtacies on the height of mountains; thoſe *religious horrors* in the depths of great foreſts; thoſe paſtorals in proſe on the verdure of meadows; thoſe emphatic deſcriptions of rocks, precipices, grottos, caſcades, &c. and above all, thoſe long details written with ſo much complacency, of all the *ſenſations* of the traveller; details which would of themſelves make volumes, and which only ſerve to inform us that on a certain occaſion the author was overcome by fear; that on ſuch a day he was ſtruck, ſeized with admiration, or deeply affected; that at another time he experienced

enced a ſweet melancholy, &c. I am of opinion that were all theſe little confidential particulars ſuppreſſed, the travels would be neither leſs inſtructive nor leſs amuſing*.

Baniſh then all thoſe romantic and common place recitals; obſerve with preciſion, be ſerious, judicious, and correct in your deſcriptions; and if you are maſter of a poliſhed ſtyle in writing, you will excel in this ſpecies of compoſition.

It is very poſſible that a diverſity of talents may meet in the ſame perſon; compoſe then works of different kinds;

* I ſpeak here only of theſe real books of travels which, whatever be the circumſtances introduced, are meant upon the whole to give us a correct idea of the countries they deſcribe. I pretend not to ſpeak of theſe works in which travelling is only the raiſed ornament, not the ground work; ſuch for inſtance as many very intereſting letters by different authors, on Switzerland, Italy, &c. In ſhort, I do not deny that a traveller may with propriety ſometimes give an account of the impreſſions he feels, provided is to be done in an intereſting manner, and not tediouſly ſpun out; and provided to he does not talk to us of his amours, or of the recollections of his youthful days,

if

if you have imagination and ſenſibility, write romances; if you have great energy of character, extended views of nature, and talents for poetry, write tragedies: but confound not the ſpecies; what is a beauty in the one would be a deformity in the other; give not to the auſtere Pallas the voluptuous attributes of Venus; nor place the maſſy club of Hercules in the hands of the graces. If you cannot correct this bad taſte in yourſelf, inſtead of cultivating, you will annihilate the fine arts; you will throw them into anarchy, and produce not ſtriking and durable pictures, but diſtorted and whimſical ſketches: like thoſe groteſque painters who repreſent an extravagant aſſemblage, where ſome pleaſing objects are mingled and confounded with a multitude of fantaſtic beings and monſters.

THE END

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